



# C. RAJAGOPALACHAR'S

## JAIL DIARY



21-12-21.— I came in rather late in the afternoon on 21st December 1921 into the Vellore Central Jail with Subramania Sastriar, our Provincial President. We were sentenced together by the Vellore Magistrate. Judgment was pronounced at 1 P M. We waited for sometime for our escort. While waiting I wrote a short letter to Mahatmaji. I said in it that 3 months S. I. was all too little. But I hoped he would have won Swaraj before January and so it made no difference. When I came out I expected he would have finished Swaraj work and got back to his normal occupation, viz Research in Dietetics.

We rode down to the prison in a motor car. Mr Krishnamachari accompanied us, but we avoided all demonstration. I was weighed at the gate. My hand-bag contained a tin of toothpowder, some cloves, a quire of paper, a sheet of pins, some pencils, and a "Fountain" pen, I had also a bottle of "Swan" ink, a kooja, a small brass cup and some books, Bible, Shakespeare, Tayumanavar, a volume of Tamil Mahabharatham, 7 volumes of P. C. Roy's Mahabharat and Robinson Crusoe. My glasses, both reading and distance, were

with me. My bed consisted of a pillow, a Jamkalam and my shawl. My clothes were also rolled up in my bed. A case of ointment for my boils and a bottle of asthma mixture were also among my things. We were taken to the solitary imprisonment cells. The Superintendent walked down our block.

Are you the sick man?

Am I put down as the sick man? Yes I am.'

"I don't know. You came in with a bottle of medicine. So I thought you were sick."

I explained my asthmatic troubles.

I then told him about my boils.

About my things, he said everything could go in except the ointment.

We saw Sessa Reddy about whom we had heard grinding corn. 2 more Nalloru Non co-operator prisoners (hard labour) were tearing old blankets to pieces and twisting woollen rope. They had happy faces. Sessa Reddy was a plous manly strong, well built dark sturdy young giant. He bore marks of the recent assault which the Jail officials had made on him. I saw Rangam Chettiar of Narayana varam reading Gita Rahasyam. We were told that for ten days we were to occupy each a cell in this line which was the condemned prisoners and solitary confinement block.

We were told that till recently no water was supplied to the prisoners visiting the privy. They were using mud or nothing at all. Now water is supplied and this was said to be a reform due to the row kicked up by Sessa Reddy. Rangam Chetty had a mud pot and a dish

also of clay. We were given an aluminium can and dish each. Washed them and had my first prison meal, 'rice and kolumba'. The latter was made of radish root and leaves, greens and chillies, 'ammaññ', salt and oil. The rice was too much for me, but it could not be enough for full eaters.

The old Deputy Jailor said that Non-co-operators were giving trouble. "Why do you people come here?" It is intended for criminals. What will be the result of it, you think?" he asked. I said, "We will get Swaraj by January. Everybody will get honest by then."

The privy was clean enough, except for the flies, with chatties, earth, and spade, and a tank of water.

I feel it is a delightful place. The fear is only for people outside jail. Locked up in my cell at 5-15 p.m. The feeling was rather strange and new as for the first time in my life I found myself in a room which was locked from outside and the key was carried away by somebody.

22.12.21 — The feeling I noted last night soon gave way to quite another feeling. Have I really become so free that Government has to lock me up if they wish to keep me? For the first time in my life I felt I was free, and had thrown off the foreign yoke. These and other thoughts at the early hour we were turned into bed without a light to do any reading or writing, and the physical strangeness of the place, kept me awake for a long time. I deliberately turned away from thoughts and memories of the busy world outside, and refused to give room for the thronging images of friends, children and relatives. The national songs of my neighbours from Nellore sweetened the hours for some time. Then the continuous, 'all is well' sang out by the convict sentries with a variety of accents and vowel lengths filled the waking hours.

I then slept off. I was free from my asthma trouble the first time after a week of much suffering.

Lakshminarasimha Rao and Venkatasubbayya are the names of the two Nellore Congress workers. They are in for one year for refusing to give security. The first was a medical student who joined Congress work. Bright innocent youth encased in prison dress most incongruously. The second is a school final youth. Seaha Reddy also is in for refusing to give security. He was a hungry giant and gladly took what I gave him out of what was doled to me. It was all too much for me and too little for him. I only asked for a broomstick, and he ran and cleaned up my cell window-sill, corner and nook more completely than the best housewife would do up her own house.

Lakshminarasimha Rao brought my can and plate cleaned up and my kooja filled with water.

I would advise every N. C. O. to learn to sing a few songs before going to jail. I felt this was a great defect in my equipment.

Lakshminarasimha Rao and Venkatasubbayya were removed from this block this morning. Went to the well with a warder and had my bath in cold water and washed my clothes. I had no bucket or washing soap for the clothes. But I had a cake of Vegetol for my body. How I wish I had more strength of muscle fully to enjoy this life!

Two of us Rangam Chetty and myself came back to our cells leaving Subramania Sastry behind at the well as he had not yet finished his bath. The warder called an "overman" to escort us to our cells. On enquiry I found that this "over-

"seer" who was to keep watch over us on our way back to our block had been convicted for dacoity! He had done 2 years and had 3 years yet. He was getting, he said, 1 Rupee a month as pay, which was kept for him in the jail chest. Had breakfast at 11 A. M., shared it with Narayanasami, sconvicted for receiving stolen property. I promised to have my evening meal with my neighbour a Koriava thief. These poor devils are dreadfully hungry. Why Government has not provided buttermilk for prisoners' a cheap and healthy food, I cannot understand.

Our warder Perumal is an ex-sepoy who has been in service in Mesopotamia. He wanted to know when the struggle would end, to which I gave my answer "Soon" sooner if everybody struggled harder. Government seems either indifferent and allows it, or determined deliberately to treat us like common criminals in every way. Our food is the same as that of ordinary criminals, we are locked in and let out at the same hours, we have to eat on the filthy ground standing or sitting on our toes and hurrying it off the plate, like beggars being fed.

But we are not going to break for all this treatment. Government does not know that this merely enhances our sacrifice, and strengthens our determination. Special comforts would undermine our strength in a subtle manner.

23—12—21.—Had slight asthma trouble last night. The evening meal does not suit at all. But I shall not bother about it yet. Very much missed our Nellore neighbours. The dark waking hours after lock-up at 6 P. M., were not relieved by their songs. The chattering warders kept the noise going in a tiresome manner. No good broom to keep our cells

clean nor any attention to cleanliness about our cells on the part of the Jail authorities. Lucky there are not many bugs in these cells. But there are plenty of mosquitoes.

Yesterday evening a man stood outside the fence as I was pacing up and down in the open and did namaskaram to us. Seems he is a munshi to the Superintendent of the Jail.

Who is this Musalman behind my cell continually lecturing in loud Hindustani preacher fashion?

In the early hours there was weeping behind my cell. Perhaps some condemned prisoners.

Khaddar is heavy to wash for a poor muscled body like mine with boils in the legs and a pair of lungs that take to hard breathing too easily. As I am struggling with it the warder tells me, Your fate has become like Nallatungal in the story. I smiled and told him that it wasn't such misfortune.

Will God give light and courage and strength to our brethren outside? Little do they yet realise what their responsibility is. I see so many in the prison cheerfully toiling away like men born to the manner who have accepted a long years incarceration and hard labour as an alternative for merely giving security like Senba Reddy and these two brave Nellore youths whose figures with broomsicks in hand sweeping the grounds in front of our cells saying Are we not scavengers? can never pass away from my mind.

Their innocent undoubting trust in their brethren outside on the strength of which they have left aged mothers and loved children for doing penance in the jails is a thing

not yet realised fully by the people. Otherwise they would not be so indifferent or so slow. Robinson Crusoe, after some time in his island, gave up looking out for any ship in the horizon! Have these too to abandon hope like Crusoe?

At 5 P.M. to-day came in Fatekhan of Ambur having refused to give security, 1 year simple. Short nice looking man, I must record a sensation of great joy on seeing a new-comer. More must come in and rapidly, to end this great struggle.

24-12-21 — It is after I am locked in at 6 P.M., and my cell barred, bolted and locked and key taken away, that the full vision of freedom daily comes to my mind. Why do not people realise the fact that the nation is locked and imprisoned like this, not at 6 P.M., but every hour, day in and day out, so that it is one long night of slavery. Realising this, one feels free when one has actually to be shut up like this by the tyrant arm that holds the country. The misery of this when one sees one's own people so busy and so punctilious in carrying out the behests of that authority as if it were God's law and Dharma that they carry out. The man who goes to prison in revolt against the foreigner's law is free, even like the rebel soldier. He is to be held down by force, not by shameful voluntary surrender. These things I knew before and uttered on platforms. But I realise them now more fully than ever before.

Fatekhan has brought with him three packets of candles. He gave me a packet. It will be useful.

I was given my medal this morning 8398, 21-12-21 [date of entry], 20-3-22 [date of release], on a little wooden piece to be hung to the neck by a string.



My History board shows the following particulars —  
 Political Reg. No 8399 Date of admission 21 12-21 Doonin  
 ed to appeal 24-12-21. Name —O Rajagopalachar Brahmin,  
 General Secretary I. N O State of Education O [O is  
 illiterate So carelessly are the entries made.]

Sentencing Court —Sub-Div Magistrate Vellore, O O  
 82 of 1921 188 Clause 2 L P O

Sentence —3 months S I.

Date of sentence —21 12 21

Date of release —20-3-22

Age —42

Height —5 ft 4 inches

Weight —104 lbs

Rangam Chetty tells me he weighed himself two days  
 Before coming to Jail and found it was 142 lbs The  
 History shows 187 lbs Patekhan Muhammad Ghousse  
 says he heard the man say 120 at the weighment at  
 the gate yesterday His "History shows 120 lbs Do they  
 reduce the real weight by 5 lbs for every body ?

At 10-30 A M we caped the Andhra N O O s at  
 the well We have not yet been allowed to meet each o'ber  
 Isaw them from our block and they returned namaramaska  
 We are taken for our baths at different hours so that we  
 may not meet each other

At noon to-day the Superintendent and one her European  
 clad in semi military uniform and the Jailor came round and  
 "verified" our identification marks. I spoke to him about  
 my evening meal being unfit for my asthma. He proposed

putting me in hospital. I hope it will not be a change for the worse

At the well this afternoon I saw many Moplahs among the gang taking water. Their faces lighted up as they saw me and heard me talk kindly. They were all of Malapuram. Returning to our block I saw a man coming out of the privy. He accosted me in military style. I spoke to him and found he too, was a Moplah. He enquired how the fight was going on. He agreed it was a mistake to have started violence. "They have arrested only 'Sadhus' [peaceful people]. Their idea is it would be easier to deal with the fighters after taking us all. Are we to be here for 5 years or is Swaraj coming?" These were some of the questions he asked. "We feel so cheerful and hopeful," he said, "when we see big and rich people coming into jail like you. You don't know what we feel," and the tears welled from his manly eyes. I answered his questions as best as I could and told him to have hope and courage. "The whole country is a jail", I said. "Yes," said he. "And we are inside a small prison" I continued, "the men outside are like dogs let loose by the master. We are like tigers kept inside barred cages." "Yes", said he, "They are dogs and we are tigers." We talked a good-while till a convict warder came and hurried him away to his task which he said was grinding wheat in the store.

In the evening a Mussalman tailor from Chittoor came in for the offence of pasting notices for the hartal on 17th. He is given R. I for 6 months, for failing to give security.

I cannot stand the strain of washing clothes. I don't know whether the fact that I did it to-day in the afternoon

made any difference. But while I did not feel more than fatigued yesterday and the day before to-day I got to breathe hard and faint. I cheered myself up by sitting down and talking to a Moplah.

After look up to-day as I sat inside the cell an involuntary feeling of weakness, and thoughts of my children seized me. It looked at first irresistible but I struggled against it. Help came to me soon. "Have not people lived away from their dear ones for months and years on business and been perfectly happy? Have you not yourself been away thus? It is the mere thought that you are in prison that weakens you. I put these questions to myself and I gathered strength.

I daily do the Gayatri a hundred and eight times after nightfall. It was at first difficult to concentrate. But I find it easier every day. I hope to grow strong enough by communion with the Highest to break these prison bars. God has given me this great opportunity to purify and strengthen myself. How few in the world have suffered imprisonment for a good and just cause! Of these brave few how few can our own motherland claim! Of these very few I am now really one. It is a distinction which I must deem myself so lucky to have attained. This is pride but permissible for a time so that I might grow strong enough to trust only in God.

Fatehkhani Mahomed Ghous a candle lights my cell to-day. Never did I see candle burn such quiet holy light before.

20-12-21 — The two greatest defects in my equipment are the ignorance of Sanskrit and Music. Without these two, a life of quiet devotion appears almost impossible to a

Hindu With these two, the loneliest desert could be made alive with Religion and Joy

This is my fifth day in prison It is Christmas day for our rulers May the Spirit of Christ purify their souls and give them Light !

Mahomed Ghouse has a strong constitution He is bathing in the open in water which has stood in the mud pot overnight. A man who undertakes to fight by suffering must be sturdy like that

Took only the water from the ' Cunjee ' and gave the rice away to the scavenger The Chief Warder came with a grin I told him I was taking my morning coffee This was a joke pitched low enough for his sense of humour I believe I will be starving myself this way, but it may be good on the whole to starve out the distempers I am now suffering from—the asthma and the boils

The Deputy Jailor has apparently been spoken to much by somebody Much consideration and enquiry has resulted, more fuss than anything done However he ordered some hot water for me to bathe A pot came from the Jail kitchen Naturally the water contained a lot of dirt However I washed myself with it as I did not have a bath yesterday

Accosted the Andhragroup from over the railings as they were at the well to bathe

A group of hard labour prisoners marched, with Vande-Matharam and clasped hands at me It was pleasant to return the salute I could see that these amenities and recognitions brighten life a little for these brave souls Some of the Tiruvannamalai N C O's were in the group My

warder Perumal brought razor brush and glass from the Andhra block Had a shave. Cut myself a little as I am not a good hand and the razor was blunt In the afternoon a whole barber was handed in and Chetty and everybody else are having the luxury of clean faces. It may be asserted fairly accurately that the reputation of Non-co-operators is among all estimates the lowest in the world in that of our Deputy Jailor He has been made to believe that the jail was a paradise before, but Non-co-operators have made it a veritable hell He seems to dread nothing so much as a Non-co-operator in jail. The poor man need not have been so badly treated. There must be a lot of misbehaviour on his part and other jail officials. But an atmosphere of hatred and fear ought not to have been created Indeed it could not have resulted without lapse from the spirit inculcated by our Master If they misbehaved our duty was to correct them direct face to face and not hand them over or attempt to hand them over for punishment by their superiors We have an opportunity in prisons to bring out the best in our principles and extort the admiration of the ignorant and the illiterate and even from among those at first ill disposed towards us The greater the evils, the maladministration and the wrongs done the greater the opportunity to bring out the soothing principles of our great Master We have a duty by him inside jails We ought to establish the superiority of his teachings even in the prison which is a little degraded world by itself where beasts are so to rule over beasts

20-12-21 — Had my asthma trouble last night I had no medicine My cell is an oblong of about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  (L. / W.) ft. with a single opening in the wall on the east about 6 ft

from the floor, with bars across, the opening being about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ft by 1 ft. The roof is an arched semi-circle the highest point being about 10 ft high. The cell door is a barred affair 6 ft 9 in by 3 ft. The cell is one in a long line of 18 cells facing west with a running verandah 5 ft wide, and a fairly big open space in front, and a privy at the N W corner, and a big drain all along the western edge of the space. Behind the line of cells must be a drain just under our cell windows, judging from the occasional gust of urine smell coming in \*. About 4 cells in our line at the southern end are occupied by condemned prisoners. These are let out periodically to wash their hands and mud pots to take their food in. A tap is provided in the south-western corner of the open space, but the supply often fails. Water is brought and kept in a pot for us. Four trees, two neem, one teak, and one arasa, adorn our grounds. Below the big arasa tree, little brick and mortar blocks are provided for prisoners to keep their food on. The tree casts a good shade, but the crows are a nuisance. We are given each an aluminium dish and an aluminium can. We have to eat in the open, as best as we can, standing or sitting on the earth. We have been using the sentries' little platforms for this purpose which I suppose is a trespass. The privy is used not only by people in this block, but by a large number of prisoners coming from the other blocks.

Just before lock-up two unglazed chatties are placed in a corner of our cell by the scavenger. These are to serve as commode and chamber pot at night. Absorbant chatties without any cover for them kept within 4 ft of our bed do not

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\* After repeated complaints to the warders incharge behind, who were the delinquents, this was stopped towards the end of my stay here.

make the place sweet. They are not even always your commode or pot, for they are removed in the morning and mixed up and are served in the evening, not necessarily the same as you used. I tried to use one as a cover for the other but the pots having round bottoms wobble on the ground too much to put one on the other safely.

We have naturally to put aside all sense of delicacy. I must record here that the prisoners as far as I have seen though they are long term convicts for grave moral offences are proper enough behaved and show little lewdness of spirit. Except for enforced loss of the sense of delicacy I have not noticed any indecency.

The warders that watch the condemned prisoners all the night with noise. They do not seem to realise that they themselves go by turns but the noise is continuous for the prisoners. Their vulgar chatter is especially irritating when it drowns the beautiful notes of our friend Mahomed Ghous's prayers which would be an elevating music for all the prisoners if undisturbed. My washed clothes have come from the town. Also in the evening the jailor gave me the things I wanted him to buy for me out of my money—some white paper clothes, candles, candle stick and matches, soap and tooth powder. There is an abundance of good candles made in the jail. I am buying a pair. The jailor has promised to shorten the strap for me.

Five fresh Non-co-operators I understand have come and are in the quarantine outside. There is no reason why they should not have been taken into this block straight away were unless they wish to isolate them from us.

A poor fellow from Andhra country told me it was in the newspapers that Swaraj had come and depended on

three years good conduct. He must have heard something about some speech of the Prince, for which there might be something about the goal of the Reforms.

The All-India Congress Committee, and the Moderate leaders must be nearing the end of their deliberations to-day. May the God of Nations lead us aright and give us courage, determination and strength.

No news papers are allowed to us. I wonder how the Irish people have decided.

27-12-21.—The great ceremony is over. The Superintendent of the Jail is to go round and see every prisoner on Monday, that is to say, he walks down each block and every prisoner is to stand in front of his cell with his tumbly and mat spread out in front. "Even your private beds should be kept out," said the Superintendent to me. "If the ground is too dirty, you might keep it on the verandah." Yesterday being Christmas day the inspection was done to-day. I asked him whether we could have any newspapers. He said "None at all." I did not remind him about his sending me to hospital as I wish to leave things to their own course. The superintendent ordered the removal of our Chittoor tailor friend, Chanda Mian Sahib, to the quarantine outside 'being a rigorous case.' He is a brave, tall, sturdy man of 43. I had my doses of mixture last night and the spasms have been kept down. I have a new boil coming up in my right leg which has suffered so much already. I had hoped it had got itself-protected but I see that the immunity does not last very long.

In spite of every discipline, every explanation to my-self of the true nature of the prison and the condition of our coun-



try a sudden weakness of heart, inexpressible and not subject to reason occasionally seizes me. It is I believe my craving for personal affection. I see about me prisoners warders fellow non-co-operators. There is devotion kindness and brotherliness but no love such as my heart wants. This comes on me as a void now and then and fills me with a kind of fear such as children must feel when they stray away from their mother. May the Mother of all created things give me courage and strength. All those who love me are still there outside the prison and they will love me all the more for this separation. They continue even now across the prison gate to love me. May their affection be realised by me properly in spite of the delusion of this strange situation and keep me steadfast.

Looked in as usual at 6 P. M. Have secured my two doses of asthma mixture.

Only two things stand between us and freedom fear of prison and fear of death. If but a large number of our people get into jail as we have done the fear of prison will be gone entirely. Fear of death must be easily got over if we spend our prison time properly in a study of our great religion.

There was trouble in getting hot water. I understand it was not an officially sanctioned privilege. So I bathed in cold water.

23-12-21 — Eighth night in this ashram. I understand that we shall not be kept long in this block. These cells are intended for condemned prisoners and for solitary confinement. For the latter purpose there is a wooden door which has to be drawn against the railings to make it dark and shut out all extra air.

There is much work to be done in the matter of treatment of political prisoners. They are treated as far as I can see in every way just like ordinary simple and rigorous convicts. There is absolutely no difference in the food or the discipline or the tasks set.

The Moplah rebel prisoners are heavily worked. It pains one's heart to see it, when one realises that they are here not for moral crime but for breaking bridges, pulling telegraph wires or cutting up roads in a bid for freedom and religion as they understood from their leaders. The only consolation is that these Moplahs knew no better code of war than the treatment now meted to them by Government.

There is no place where the atmosphere is so full of expectancy as in the jail. Every prisoner, as he is heaving up a heavy load or finds a minute's rest when running down to the latrine, asks how long are we to toil like this? When is Swaraj coming? Are we winning? Where is Gandhi? and so on.

The washing is too hard work apparently for me. I felt so fatigued to-day, that I could not eat well and after that had to be in bed till 2 P.M. How weak I have come to be! Age and sickness tell even though you have not out-grown your youth in foolishness.

The food we get is a perfect discipline as I told Rangayya Chetty to-day. How many in their own homes get less variety and worse quality. The kolambu and rice for both meals every day, with innumerable varieties of dirt, stone, hair, wool and all sorts of things in it, seems to us so dreary, because we have coddled ourselves with varieties all our life, blind to the dreary lives of others around us. It is

with such thoughts we get cheerfully through our meals the three of us, Sastry Chetty and myself on the little sentry platform. Ghouse gets a different kind of rice and kolambu. Caste and community pursue us even in these places. Jail people give rations much on the basis of caste.

I constantly hear the clank of bar fetters on some poor Hoplah prisoners. The Jail officials brought me a requisition from two Dindugal friends Thambusami Naidu and Natesa Pillay to interview me. I wrote back a note thanking them for their kindness but begged to be excused saying I could have only one interview in a month according to the rules. I was quite well and happy and their seeing me would serve but little purpose. I understand the interviews have to be conducted across a wire gauze screen. I am thinking whether I should ever exercise this privilege under these conditions.

Slave labour has not been abolished. The whole system of jail administration is but a scheme for slave labour in its fullest shape. Work is extracted from thousands of able bodied men without paying for it by the sanction of pure brutal force and cruelties free from public observation or criticism. Even where cattle may and must be used as for pressing oil or drawing the kavala, a gang of men are made to do the work, because the slaves are available in such large numbers. I would not judge the system thus, if there were any idea of reformation along with these brutalities. But not only is reformation absent, but it is almost an article of the creed of all jail authorities that the convict is beyond moral redemption. No attempt whatever is made to reach his higher feelings or his soul. Indeed nobody seems to believe that any convict has higher feelings at all or a soul. Therefore I say it is a mere factory for slave labour giving the

absolute minimum of food and intended to get maximum work. The slaves are not owned, but hired for a limited period. So there is no abiding interest in their health or morals but the largest use is made of them and good conduct is ensured only for the master's purpose, during the limited time, by strict overseeing and barbarous penalties rather than by instruction or example which is slow and tedious. The officials are typical slave drivers, the convicts are typical slaves. How can there be any moral development or regeneration under these circumstances?

29-12-21 —In spite of the mixture, the asthma spasms disturbed my night. I think it is the evening meal. There was a big quarrel among the warders. Oae, a Panchama, it seems, mocked at my neighbour Ghouse's loud prayers last night, and another warder a Muhammdan was incensed, but kept his wrath for the morning when it burst out in a terrible explosion. The result was an emphasis on the Panchama's caste. He seemed to repent for his conduct especially as he was in a sad minority, but the wrath of the Mussalman was unappeased. I explained to them both their respective errors.

There was never again any direct or indirect interference with Muhammad Ghouse's prayers.

Prison going by itself will not achieve anything unless the heart partakes in it and not the mere body. A shake of hands or an embrace increases affection, but only if it is the outward expression of hearts that come together in love. An enforced or conventional embrace is a worthless formality. Even so, if men and women of India embrace prison life, not because it is the present convention of patriotism,

but because they are drawn to it irresistably as to a haven of rest from the painful condition of national servitude outside the prisons then there is freedom for India through the prison gates. If hundreds of men and women feel that the voluntary co-operation with injustice and national dishonour outside the jails is no longer tolerable, and accept imprisonment as a happier condition of life because it releases them at once from that co-operation of the prison and if they feel that the privations and inconveniences are preferable to the sin and the pain of immoral co-operation with wrong outside then it becomes true martyrdom, which cannot fail to produce its effects according to the laws of God. Even if there be no immediate national advantage resulting from it, each individual has the supreme consolation that he at least has released himself from the sin and pain of voluntary assistance in keeping this nation in servitude. If we believe in the creed of Ahimsa and if we have faith in the law of love and suffering this must lead to success. Short of yielding up our lives imprisonment is the fullest expression of our revolt against the evil which we seek to end. The greater the privations in the jails, the more cruel the treatment and the more complete the isolation from the outside world, the nearer to perfection is our release from voluntary participation in the evil system that we have resolved to isolate and destroy and the more effective will be our sacrifice in helping to achieve that end. It is faith in this principle that enabled before our time the brave martyrs whose lives we read in western history in the struggles for freedom and religion to be imprisoned in damp dungeons and stand all the terrible torments inflicted on them. We have not yet shown a hundredth part of the resolution and the

sincerity of purpose shown by those great men, though the manner in which the nation is responding to the call is full of promise. The measure of our hope is not in the mere number of those that now embrace imprisonment, but in the cordiality of that embrace—in the reality of the choice of imprisonment in preference to helping the continuance of wrong outside the jails. Flocking into jails expecting a mechanical result will produce none. Jail-seeking should be the symptom of the organism's revolt against its condition, then is the cure certain. How many who have now accepted imprisonment have done it as a moral necessity arising from their inner revolt against national humiliation, and not as a mere device for the embarrassment of the Government, with which they hope it will not be able to cope?

30—12—21 — The jail authorities seem determined to keep us in isolation from the Andhra group. We three, Chettiar, Sastriar and myself are here for over ten days, in the solitary cells along with the condemned prisoners and recalcitrant convicts, and there seems no sign yet of our removal to any other block, nor of me to the hospital. I understand that the two Aligarh young men and Lakshminarayana and many others are there. That seems to be the reason for keeping me away from hospital.

Have written a letter for sending home to the kids

Some linseed has been just brought and I have put it on the new boils in my right leg. Washed my left leg with hot water and soap and put ointment. The best part of our discipline is the newspaper privation.

Read little or nothing to-day

31 12-21.— In spite of the clearing of the bowels and two doses of iodide mixture, no sleep. The lungs gave trouble from 12 midnight and kept on till early morning. It is disgusting to record my physical ailments from day to day. How I wish I had a healthy body which could give free play to my spirit.

The Superintendent saw me to-day. He agreed that my evening diet should be lighter in bulk and promised to see if I could be given toasted bread. He promised also hot water for bathing. He is not in the habit of seeing his decisions worked out quickly. It is clear he has deliberately decided to keep me away from hospital and wants me to be attended to here, fomentation for the boils and all. He strongly recommended vaccine injections for my boils. So I had an injection this evening. I had also some sort of horic fomentation for my legs. the water gets cold in transmission from the hospital.

The Vellore friends have sent the spinning wheels and corded cotton. Chettiar and Sastriar are learning. Ghouse Sahib is a practised hand.

Wrote a letter to the children and sent it to the Superintendent for sending by registered post at my cost.

11 1 1922:—Very little sleep last night. The injection seems to have given a slight fever. The asthma trouble too joined. Took less curries in the morning than usual. worked at the spinning wheel for some time. Tepid fomentation and sinadura iodine for the legs. Got both Israel and steel.

The Deputy Jallo appears to have gone to Malabar and probably heard his friends speak about me. He has come back and behaves in a friendly manner. The Superintendent

appears to have ordered hot water for me. I got from the Deputy Jailor some oil and soap-nut. The warder placed the services of two prisoners to help me at my bath and I had really a luxurious bath in one of the store rooms. At this rate I should be unwilling to leave the jail.

I understand now, that some Andhra friends in the jail made a special representation to have an interview with me, which of course was refused by the Superintendent, and on the other hand served to rouse his fears. Hence the deliberate isolation. Mr Lakshminarayana has, I hear, been discharged from hospital. They may now let me in there. If I get my legs done up into a healthy condition and don't have these wretched boils, I could be an up-to date prisoner.

2—1—22 — Fever. I did not take my rice, but drank some rice-water instead. In the afternoon I was removed to hospital. Muhammad Hussain of Lucknow and the Nellore youths are in the hospital. I am put on milk and sago. I could not manage the quantity, so put the greater part of it by.

Mahomed Hussain has a lot of complaints about the hospital. There is Hira Singh of the Lahore Conspiracy here. Also some Moplahs. The Moplahs enquired how I came to be in jail. They say they will take 4 years gladly for the three months of mine.

3—1—22 — The fever left me at about 3 a.m. having been dosed with calomel and quinine. The hospital is a real addition to the terrors of prison life. It consists of 3 big rooms and no small or special wards, with a verandah in front and another in the back. My ward contains 12 beds. The beds are all full of bugs. All the windows are barred and there



is only one door. The place is locked up in the evening like the rest of the jail and the sentry shouts out his all is well under our very ears. The front verandah is not left vacant but is used for cases needing fresh air. The verandah is a general latrine during the night, i. e. after lock up at 6 p. m. Incessant making of water passing of stools by all sorts of patients. There are no commodes or decent chamber pots. Chattles without lids and general receptacles (big mud pots) also kept open the whole night. The place is a hell overnight. But in the morning it is all cleared up and sprinkled liberally with phenyle, and the Superintendent who is an I. M. S. doctor comes about 10 a. m. when he sees nothing suggesting reform. Why a few proper chamber pots with lids and good commodes should not be kept in the hospital I can't understand. They would be a non recurring charge and for quite moderate expenses add much to the sanitary condition.

Early morning the deputy jailor's kind officers brought for me a wheat cake from the Punjab Prisoners kitchen. A fine old Sikh Nidan Singh is his name greeted me with Bando Mataram and gave me the cake. I said I could not eat anything like so heavy. But he would not leave me. So I took the cake and thanked him. The fomentation seems to have done my legs good. They are less painful now. The quinine and the fever I don't know which is more responsible for it has made me too feeble.

The paralysis case at one end of the room does not improve my spirits.

4-1-22.— Dr. ———— about whom by the way I must record with sorrow that I have seen few men more subservient to their superior officer and more callous to the

spirit of the times, carried out the superintendent's instructions. He pricked all the boils, pressed the puss out and washed the legs with lotion, applied mercury ointment and gave me an injection of vaccine.

I had no fever during the night and I would have had a good rest but for the bugs which invaded my bed in more persistent fashion this night than during the first night. They seemed to have taken some time to acquaint themselves of the arrival of the new victim. Almost the whole night was spent in a contest with these terrible foes.

I understand Subba Rao and Venkat Rao have been put in solitary cells by way of punishment, the former for writing to the Superintendent threatening to fast, and the latter for standing with arms folded on chest during the great weekly parade of the Superintendent. Few Europeans understand that there is no aggressiveness or impoliteness meant in folding one's hands over chest. They don't know that it is an attitude of special respect among Hindus. Subba Rao, a young non co-operator from Cuddappah, complained to the Superintendent that the jailor used foul language at him and when witnesses were insisted on, he cited three prisoners who had been present. The prisoners supported Subba Rao but the result was subsequently the principal man among them was given bar fetters for the offence of giving evidence against a jail authority. Subba Rao naturally felt that he was the cause of the poor fellow's additional misery and wrote to the Superintendent that he was going to inflict on himself a fast for the injustice for which he was the cause.

A carpenter spoke yesterday to me what typically represents the atmosphere in all prisons now. "When will

all this end sir? "Soon" said I, we should wait. But what is it you want to come to an end? When will what they all say is coming—Swaraj—come? When will this system stop by which they take three rupees worth of work from every day and give food without enough salt, and whole dholl \*which is not boiled and all for half a man's stomach.

I understand about Hira Singh though he himself cannot be brought to give information about it, that 4 lakhs was the amount of his property all in money dealings which was confiscated. When asked about it he says don't care in Chinaman's English. When war broke out he was deported from Hong Kong where he was doing business since youth. He went to Bangkok and escaped to Singapore and returned to his village in Punjab where he was arrested and sentenced for life for conspiracy. From Hasanibag Jail he escaped, was again arrested and is now here in hospital with a painful trouble which disables him from sitting. For six years in Hasanibag prison he says he never saw the sun. He was working grinding corn eating sleeping and doing everything else in a solitary cell till his brain got almost affected. He says now he is allowed to move about which is a blessing. He is cheerful and brave. Jail is my house he says. If I don't like anything I don't do it. I take punishment. That is all.

Without force no nation has got freedom. In China too it was the same. You cannot get the people to do it.

An abominable system prevails in our jails. The prisoners are also of soaking whole unhusked dholl in water, and then are fed and making kolumbu with it. The correction is extremely difficult by the prisoners and appears to be the cause of many stomach disorders among them.

sacrifices of the non-violent method," argued Hira Singh. I tried to put it to him how [1] we were not fit for force, [2] we were not fit for civil self government unless we were able to organize a non-violent revolt and [3] how if the violence of a few people ever obtained freedom from foreign domination, it would result only in the government of India by a few people commanding such violence, whereas a non-violent revolution would naturally lead to true self-rule by the people of India. But Muhamood Hussain who was acting as interpreter for me was too ill to keep up the conversation. He felt giddy and we retired for the night.

Raghavayya and 4 convict warders, Telugu people, have been removed from this jail to day. The latter probably for suspected assistance to the non co operators. The former's case is not known whether it is a mere transfer of jail or warrant for a trial on a new charge. Sesha Reddy has been taken out also, probably for a trial on a second charge which had been pending at Nellore. The pain in my leg is so great that I can do nothing by way of reading or writing.

5-1-22 — Muhamood Hussain and I were permitted to sleep in the front verandah comparatively free from bugs and a little further off from chamber pots at night. I had very good sleep in spite of the pain in the leg. It was a heavy sleep, probably the result of the injection.

Hira Singh told us last night the story of the Lahore Conspiracy case prisoners. They were all in Hasari Bagh in Behar, given bad food and heavy work and terrible penalties. Flogging, handcuffs, and chaining to the wall in cells in standing position whole day for a week, during nights also, handcuffed sometimes arms behind and sometimes in front.

chained to the wall on the tower to serve as example to all prisoners and so on. They were given gunny bag clothes which they refused to wear and undertook punishment. The thing became so intolerable when a Punjabi jailor came and took charge that they resolved to make an attempt to escape and get shot if they failed. Three iron bars were procured for them by the scavengers and one of them made holes in the cell wall, near the roof and some at night at the bottom of the wall. They kept chanting prayers aloud so that when the sentry walked up and down the verandah he did not notice the noise of digging. When the work was finished three of them got out into the verandah at night and caught and gagged the warder on duty and took his overcoat and lamp. One of them put on the coat and sat down with the lamp at the end of the verandah and the other two stuck on like lizards to their cell doors awaiting the head warder. When the latter came he imagined the warder on duty was sleeping and went up to call him. The two that were hanging on to the cell door went up from behind and gagged the head warder who fainted at once. They took the keys from him and went about opening all the cells. But they were now nearing change of watch and were in a hurry. They also did not know the keys and found it difficult to open all the cells. They released only eighteen in all. The party hastened up to the prison wall and standing one over another they pulled themselves up with blankets and let themselves down similarly on the outer side. Three of them been told to keep the warder and head warder but they were impatient and joined the rest of the party too soon. The warders somehow got rid of the gunny bag and raised alarm which brought a party in pursuit when some

of them were still on the wall. They had armed themselves with the cell locks which they threw at the warders, and one of them lighted a match and said half aloud "They are brothers, don't throw the bombs at them." It was dark and the trick succeeded. The warders retired in fear of the bombs. Six of the prisoners injured themselves badly, as the man on the top of the wall attended more to lifting up than to letting down. They were in a strange country. Five of the men who broke their legs sat under a culvert, but the village people discovered them and pointed them out to the Police who came in pursuit. Hira Singh was also hurt but he was carried by his companions. He was a heavy weight and begged his friends to leave him and save themselves. The next day he was arrested at Arrah, and some at Benares, only three finally escaped. The re-arrested men were tried and to the life sentence was added an additional term, and they continued in the same prison. The jail punishments went on as before. They once again broke the prison bars and told the jail authorities that they could escape if they liked, but they did not want to. They only wanted reasonable treatment in prison. Things were somewhat better after this. They were a difficult charge to the jail authorities and they had to get Pathans from Punjab specially to serve as warders. After a period, the Bihar Government handed the prisoners to Madras and they are all now in various jails in this province.

Hira Singh had near to 5 lakhs money. About 2 lakhs or more, he says, has been taken away by Government and the rest is with Chinamen and others to whom he had lent money. "Jail has become my home. I don't want to go out unless India is free. But it is very hard for India to be free. It

will take at least two more years for the people to rise said he in a tone of sorrow

We all prayed to God each in his own way after this story and retired to sleep. The morning is bright. The hospital floor is being cleaned up and the convict attendants are moving about busily as usual. Everything goes on in the daily routine way now. The Sub-assistant surgeon will come presently and the Superintendent too and enquire about our health. When O Lord! will You give to our people the hunger and the passion for freedom? The human soul is a wonderful potentiality and if God only wills it our people can be electrified into action never dreamt of as yet. We in prison can only pray and wait.

6.1.23 — Rangam Chetty came to hospital yesterday. He had a long story to tell of the persecution of the Jail officials since I left that block. The Deputy Jailer and the chief warder stopped the oil for his lamp and refused to give it in spite of his protest that his bowels were bad and he needed a light to guide him to the chamber pot at night. He stopped taking the evening meal so that his bowels may not give him trouble during the night. Thereupon he was summoned to appear before the Superintendent for the offence of not eating but was finally ordered to go to hospital. Satriar was spoken to harshly and insultingly by the Chief Warder. Stand up at the door when I come. I am a superior officer. You are a convict and so on.

We came to jail voluntarily and we must submit to such discipline, harsh treatment and, I would add insults as we would subject all the prisoners to if we had charge of the jail ourselves. We should not ask for any favours for with

grants of favours come the frowns also Let us compare ourselves with the Punjab prisoners who, for love of country and honour, are serving out life sentences bravely and cheerfully There are Moplah prisoners who are serving, for their faith, sentences of 4 and 5 years and more and are treated like common felons and patiently bearing it as if meekness were their very nature What is our insignificant share of suffering compared to these? Should we not bear them without complaint?

The jail officials have for the first time to deal with a number of people other than felons and degraded characters We should allow for this and bear with them We can make them see a new world altogether if we impress them with our meekness and our courage Our attempts at prison-reform by complaints will only lead to the creation of an atmosphere of mutual ill-will and hostility besides being futile in achieving any immediate object Higher authorities will stand by the jail officials whatever be the faults pointed out

I was pained to the quick to see an exhibition of brutality on the part of the sub-assistant surgeon who for some cause which I did not perceive, wrung the ears of a moplah patient To the brutality was added the ridiculousness of this little man armed with brief authority by a foreign Government and secure, in the secrecy of a prison, imposing his little physical strength on a brave soldier who is probably here after risking his life before the machine guns of government's military forces and is placed under the little man's charge because he is sick I learnt afterwards that the man was not one of the rebel prisoners He was an ordinary Moplah convict transferred to this prison This however makes no difference



The mercury ointment has overshoot the mark - It has blistered my legs terribly. The little Doctor's attempts at doing good by hot fomentation was excruciatingly painful. He has added to the tortures by applying carbolic acid to the ulcers. But I am not here as a patient. I am here primarily as prisoner and it is grace on the part of the Government to take any trouble about my body. If they torture me by ignorant over application of mercury ointment it is an unattended form of that violence which they would be entitled to apply directly if they liked and passed necessary legislation. Abdul Subhan of Tiruvannamalai brave youth who has one year's rigorous substantive and one more year rigorous in default of security two years in all on a charge of rioting brought for picketting has come to hospital with fever. He and two others of Tiruvannamalai refused to defend themselves. Satyamoorthy appeared for other accused persons in the case and it is said offered to defend those men also but they refused to take the service.

Brooramulu of Bezwada has come also with pains all over the body. The little surgeon was particular in seeing his bed placed at the extreme end of the room away from us—Muhammed Hussain and me. Just had news that the moderates are meeting on 13th inst at Konaes and that there will be some sort of Conference at Madras on 17th.

7-1-23 —Sreeramulu says that the political situation is miserable, that Gandhiji is sitting in Ahmedabad the Congress has done nothing that there is no good being in jail and so on. I asked what right he had to expect that the world would go into an earthquake because some of us had come to jail. What had he himself done when he was free all these two years of intense activity? What had he and

others done when Tilak was in jail for 6 years? I told him there was no use being impatient and that we can but do our own duty. Even if we achieved nothing in our generation, we had a duty which we should cheerfully perform. Freedom is often attained by the sacrifices of successive generations, and we should therefore be prepared to lay at the altar of the country what we can give or suffer without hungering for immediate fruit,—even if we do not feel we are able to reach the Gita ideal of duty without concern for results altogether. Think where we should have been if our fathers and grandfathers, had made definite sacrifices for freedom's sake. Would we not have then carried forward the battle with greater faith and vigour? By our sacrifices we have at least made the history of India in this generation an honourable chapter, a relief from the continuous story of surrender, indifference, and dishonour. Even this, is an inheritance for our children. So let us not lose faith.

Yesterday I met Hainam Singh who was in the Komagata Maru. He told me the story of the Budge Budge affair.

The convict 'overseer' Parasuraman has finished his Ramayanam and lent the book to me. He has taken the volume of Tamil Mahabharatham. Muhammood Hussain is studying the Gita and is doing it with great diligence and respect.

Sreeramulu is positive that Subba Rao and Venkatrao are kept in close confinement in solitary cells, locked in, both day and night.

8-1-22 —Ramamurti came with a sick headache and is in bed in hospital. Saw Shafiuk-ur-Rahman (of Aligarh College)

and Narasimhachari (Vakil of Guntur) at the hospital office. What a bright unchanged and innocent face Shafik has!

The man below in the verandah has pneumonia and is busily looked after by the fellow prisoners on duty with some diligence.

Related the story of Savarkar's arrest and escape and the Hague proceedings to Md. Hussain and Bangam Chetty and others, who had not known it

Had a discussion with Md Hussain about the true basis on which the agitation and education for freedom should be based not on atrocities and injustices of the foreign rule but on the inherent right of every nation to rule themselves so that even if the British Government were or became the best in the world and there were no Punjab or Malabar atrocities, we were still bound to fight for self rule

Ramamurti was vomiting the whole night Hanumanta Rao and Md Hussain were sitting near him soothing and helping him Dr ——— came up at night and fell upon poor Hanumanta Rao "Who is that fellow sitting there" "I don't want you here" "I must turn you out of the hospital" and so on And then he told Ramamurti to call for the hospital orderly or *jadmal* if he wanted anything and so on. This man's heartlessness and little-mindedness surpasses my worst estimate He has lost himself in the idea of prison authority He is more a jailor than a doctor and more a tyrant than anything else I never thought that an educated young man could be so little minded But such is the force of environment

It seems Block I is locked up even during day so that the men have hereafter no exercise or walking space

Rigorous imprisonment is far better than simple imprisonment under these circumstances. But we are here to accept any conditions of jail life. If we show unhappiness over any of the rigours imposed, Government wins. They seek to cause pain and if we are miserable they have attained their object. We can defeat their object only by cheerfully accepting solitary confinement, all day lock up, and everything else they have the power and the audacity to impose. Only let us not deserve such additional penalties by any dishonourable acts. Md Hussain told a good story how Bahadur Shah smiled when a British Officer brought his son's head in a chagor and offered it as a present to the father. His attendants afterwards asked the imprisoned Emperor why he smiled when his dear son's head was brought to him in cruel mockery. He answered that the object of the enemy was to cause pain, and he should not help him to attain that object by showing any grief.

I learnt from Shafiuk who had come to hospital for medicine in the evening that they have not yet begun locking them up during day time.

9-1-22 Monday — We cannot be said to be unhappy at all in jail. At any rate it is difficult to realise that we are in prison and are not out enjoying a holiday, as we half a dozen in hospital sit together after lock up and talk away from the storied past.

Often the thought occurs to me how I am going to provide for and do the necessary duties by my children and those left behind by my deceased brother. But the thought serves only to distract my mind and I can only leave things in the hands of God.

I was surprised to learn that Md Hussain is only 19 and Shafiq only 20 They are so much more mature in body and mind than our lads at that age Md. Hussain is studying the Gita and spinning most devotedly

10-1-29 Tuesday —I understand the looking up order is being put in force in 1st Block since yesterday and they are let out in the day at fixed hours for necessary purposes

Rangam Chetty is so particular about little causes of complaint that all the attendants are up against him After all, complaints on our part come in the result to be complaints against fellow prisoners, for all the work is done by prisoners. The advent of educated men in prisons should not be a source of disgust or annoyance to the fellow prisoners as well as to the prison officials To the latter we are an eye-sore, for they find it difficult to have their own way with us, but why should we get to be disliked by the poor imprisoned slaves? We should bring the balm of culture good feeling and hope in their midst and not be a cause for additional torture

Non official visitor Adiseshayya came this morning and stopped a few minutes at my bedside and enquired who I was He seems bent on looking into the Kolambu question. I told him that 4 oz of dholl if it really reached every prisoner would be a good ration but now it apparently stayed away as sediment, sediment of some sort or other! The gentleman was here at 10 A.M So the Kolambu to-day was good (That is Rangam Chetty's report I take only a little of Nidan Singh's dholl and no Kolambu) In the evening the thing got back to its usual horrid condition Mr Palmanathia Jaidu another non official visitor came here a week ago There are I learn 6 non-official visitors They seem

to have no time generally to come to hospital and no time to stay and enquire even if they come

Hira Singh told us last night a true story, of which he was an eye-witness, of the execution of a dacoit in China. The head was cut off and three men fired into the beheaded man's trunk with rifles. Then the chest was ripped open and the heart was taken out. The head and heart were to be hung up along with a tale of his crimes in the market place. The high officers and other gentlemen who witnessed the execution came forward to take slices of the dacoit's flesh, and the chief officer who was Hira Singh's friend took away the entire heart. The head only was hung up for public view in this case. When a brave man's flesh was available, it was taken by the Chinese in this way. Hira Singh was witness to the fact that the dacoit's heart was cooked and eaten in his friend the officer's house. He was also asked to partake of it, but of course he refused.

It seems everything is eaten in China except three things, rats, donkeys and cats. Dogs are eaten and dog flesh is sold in meat shops.

The convict [overseer] Parasuraman who gave me Ramayanam served in China and East Africa. He said pathetically that throughout the war he was not hit by any bullet but when he came back he was a victim to a false charge of culpable homicide. He will be released in a few months. He is an extraordinary good fellow.

11-1-22 Wednesday —

Mr Hussain was discharged from hospital and has gone away to his block. He has taken the Gita with him. Barrister Lakshminarayana came to hospital yesterday. It looks as if the

non-co-operators practically monopolise the hospital. Mr Lakshminarayana gave a long account of the work himself and his friends did in detecting the administrative crimes in the jail and in the reformation of the jail atmosphere. He said brutal beating which was once very prevalent had stopped since their advent.

The other Sub-Assistant surgeon has come. He seems to be a less talkative man than his brother

Read the Golden Treasury Series introduction to the trial and death of Socrates

Krishnaswami has written a post card to the Superintendent to know the rules as to interviews. He has written it on the 3rd January that is a little before my letter reached them

12 1 22. Thursday—Had a discussion with Lakshminarayana as to his proposal that we should fast tomorrow for the Prince of Wales's arrival at Madras. He finally agreed this morning to give up the idea. He is unconvinced but only yields to my opinion. The hartal and refusal to participate in the welcome is a demonstration to show that the people of India are not happy and contented as the Government of India may seek to make out during the Prince's visit and attendant festivities. We have by our very entry into prison done what we can to demonstrate our *state of mind*. It would only emphasise an unintended personal hostility to the Prince if we in jail fast on the day of his arrival in our province as if it were a day of grief. The country is no doubt observing hartal and we in jail cannot participate in the hartal, but there is no reason why we should invent some other method of showing our disapproval of his

visit At any rate I feel that fasting should be reserved for greater things and for occasions of special and great grief and self purification The Prince's arrival is an occasion for mere demonstration not of grief, but of disapproval He is not personally associated with any special evil done to or by ourselves, which may be reason for taking to the extreme form of national penance

Had the asthma fit last night, had been free till now since coming to hospital

Hira Singh is right when he observed last night that India is greater than other countries in three things. Piety, Hospitality and Chastity of women

Dr Rajan and others seek to see me and have written to the Superintendent Have requested they may be informed that I wish them to communicate with my people at Salem and come together with them sometime, before the 20th when my first month expires I understand we are allowed one interview a month and also one letter either way per month. Md Hussain and Narasimbachari bitterly complain that they have no fresh air or exercise being locked up whole day and night They are only let out in the morning to visit the latrine and this is claimed to be exercise and fresh air

13—1—22 Friday —Spinning and Socrates most of the time Discharged from Hospital and removed to the old solitary cell

I find that the new orders are in force here also for locking up cells whole day and night It is atrocious that we should be thus locked up in single cells, i e, condemned to solitary confinement, men sentenced to rigorous imprisonment are freer, in that they have to work in the open We



who have come here believing in the efficacy of suffering should deem ourselves fortunate in that we are made to go through the most atrocious forms of imprisonment

But think of the barbarity of putting any person because he is convicted of a moral crime [let me talk only of those who have been found guilty of a deviation from the moral law] in a room 100 ft. square depriving him needlessly from God's light and air and sky. An ignorant doctrine might lead men to isolate criminals from society but what doctrine wise or ignorant can justify the deprivation of those things that are necessary for the sustenance of healthy physical life. Here is a big open space in front of the cells barred and protected and watched in all manner of ways, which is not needed or used for any other purposes and from which you are looked out as if out of mere revenge. I should unhesitatingly condemn this as base and revengeful inhumanity, even in the case of the worst criminals, and I should make no point out of the fact that this cruelty is practised against gentlemen convicted for political work and persons who have voluntarily sought imprisonment. It would be like claiming good and healthy water to drink for political offenders as if regular criminals might be left to suffer in thirst or drink contaminated water.

14-1-22 Saturday — Asthma again last night

My neighbours B Venkatappa and Maikutl, a mopliah are suffering solitary confinement the former by judicial sentence and the latter as jail punishment over and above, the 10 years B. I that he has for homicide. But except for the odd spinning they have as labour I see not much difference between them and me undergoing simple imprisonment.

so far as the cell confinement goes It cannot be that this is intended It is best I ask the Superintendent and make sure Of course we are here to undergo everything inflicted of purpose, but let us not give room for the defence of mistake Locked in at 7 in the morning after being let out a little after 6 Let me now spin for myself in my cell while Alaikutti twists rope for Government in his

Strange whispers reach the jail from the outer world, shadows would be a better analogy than whispers, for you can rely on jail news only as little as you can judge the shape of objects from their shadows Exaggerations are the nearest approaches to reality I am told the Madras City Police are on strike these ten days, that there was a successful boycott and in fact utter darkness and silence in the city of Madras on the Prince's visit, that there had been street lectures at all corners, that at one place a disturbance was caused by a "government-side" Chetty talking insolently about Swaraj, and soldiers came up and there was firing and six deaths That there is a battle going on at the N W Frontier and the Government had heavy losses That in Malabar the operations have not yet terminated I understand that Mrs Lakshminarayana with some friends came this morning and had an interview with her husband in the hospital

At 3 15 p.m news was brought to me that Dr. Rajan and others were waiting to see me I had a talk with him My sorrowful brother had come also They were cheerful and brave which is all I wanted I am glad to learn that picketting work is going on in Salem though I did not like the news that many shops were burnt down Honest Vasudevayya has gone in for 6 months rigorous, Anantachari

is in remand, Ramakrishnayya and another Mussalman have also got 6 months simple for disobedience at Tirupatur. It is something. I wish very much that more people carried the war into the prisons. It is the only effective thing we can do in Tamil land. I am told I am again appointed General Secretary along with Nehru and that V.J. Patel is acting for Nehru and Dr. Rajan officiates for me. Gandhi is appointed Dictator i.e., to carry on all Congress work irrespective of meetings. This is good, but he won't find his successor easily or even with difficulty. There is a Conference at Bombay of persons of all shades of opinion and Sankaran Nair is presiding. Ghandhiji is attending. I fear rather I hope, nothing will come out of it for I don't believe there is any thing good that can come out of such a meeting. Nothing is possible in any direction for such a meeting but cutting down our demands or suspending the Congress Programme which is unthinkable wrong just now when victory is nigh.

Rajan tells me sad news about Madras during the Prince's visit. Intimidation reigned high. The hartal was successful but aided by intimidation at least to some extent. This was surprising to me because on all former occasions hartals were easily organised and were successful without any violence or intimidation. This time I am told that there was plenty of counter work and in order to meet this the people appear to have been tempted away into the wrong path. A big crowd gathered at the Wellington Cinema which had hoisted loyal flags. Dr. Rajan says that the police and soldiers behaved very well. But a man belonging to the Cinema Company fired a revolver and killed a Mussalman from Triplicane.

I was glad to learn that Ramanathan is working at Madras in charge of volunteer work. Rajagopalan did not go to the Congress. I told Dr. Rajan to go on a tour and push up the work.

I understood that the '*Swarajya*' was going on and its subscribers list had increased. The *Independent* was stopped. Mahadev was awarded 18 months. Devadas was editing a written weekly newspaper and had a corps of 100 volunteers to make copies.

I was told that Mr. Andrews had seen Malabar and had gone back to Ghandhiji, that Warri Kunneth Mahammad Haji had been captured. With his capture the rebellion must be taken as ended.

Non official visitor Mr. Duraisamiah in faultless dress came up as I was returning from the gate after the interview. He enquired about my health and food. Told him about the single cell locking up, asked him to enquire whether it was intended to give us solitary confinement or whether it was a mistake. He said he had noted the matter but I fear nothing will be done by him.

On the whole, the peep into the outer world given me through Dr. Rajan did not gladden me. The people do not realise how near they are to victory and have not yet made up their minds to put forth a supreme effort. May heaven give them the wisdom to sacrifice and fight for all they are worth. The news about the Andhras is invigorating. I am told that they have begun non-payment of taxes in some Taluks.

15-1-22 Sunday —I learnt yesterday the disgusting news that N. S. Ramasami Iyengar gave an abject apology in the

addition came against him and agreed that he would abstain from politics for a year and got acquitted. How any man with his previous history and position could bring himself to such utter surrender open and degrading, I cannot imagine. After this nothing can be safely put aside as impossible. Heaven should protect us from weakness and keep us in the path of courage and patriotism.

There is nothing like temporary privation to make one enjoy and appreciate the real beauty of the simple essentials of life. In the unbridled license of ordinary life in these days we have lost the capacity for real enjoyment of simple things and hanker for more and more complications. With all that they do not satisfy. Occasional strict privation gives a tone to the system, both physical and moral, by giving an appetite for essential things. I never enjoyed more light and fresh air and a simple stroll in the open as I did this morning after my cell door was opened. I never understood the beauty of the taste of simple foodstuffs as I do now in prison. The exaggerated horror with which imprisonment is looked upon is as foolish as it would be if occasional fasts and retirements from busy life were considered as great misfortunes.

Sundays and other holidays are in the nature of things the opposite of pleasant for us people under duress. All the warders and officials go home much earlier than on ordinary days so we are hurried through our meal and the washing of our dishes. With a little imagination we should be able to submit to this cheerfully and even actively help to close early and send the poor devils to their homes, to their children and women folk as soon as possible. The life of the

warder is little better than his fellow inmate the convict. The convict has his rations free, but the warder gets perhaps nothing more in the shape of wages. His fear of superior officials and their arbitrary exercise of powers, is not less than that of the convict. Perhaps the warder's anxiety is greater. His life is on the whole a miserable lot though he takes unconscious vengeance for it by brutality towards the poor devils, the convicts. "Give us Rs 30 a month, we shall be happy. Let Gandhi give or the Government, it does not matter. We shall gladly take a few rupees less from Gandhi than from the Government," This is their proposition.

The hospital is a regular hell for bugs. I am told all the wards are the same. In the blocks there are lice and fleas, besides. The prisoners' blankets and clothes see washing only once in a way and then are hurried in a crowded competition, and in quantities of water which it would be a real miracle for a man, who has not seen a jail, to see fully pass over body and cloth. There are taps and beautiful looking enclosures with shower bath pipes overhead which may please a visitor, but the latter do not work. My cell and the other cells in this solitary confinement block are comparatively free from bugs and lice. There is no furniture but only a brick and mortar platform for bed, and the roof is an arched masonry work. The door is iron bar frame. There is no crowding, hence the place is free from vermin. My life in the hospital was during nights a continual bug-hunt. In this respect my solitary confinement cell is a blessing, but the flies are a great nuisance. These poor fellow-denizens of the British prison would be quite welcome to share my board and

lodging. If only they gave up some of their bad practices. If they promised to live only on rice and *kolambu* or on my milk and sago, I would gladly share my meals with these poor hungry things. But as it is their taste is all-embracing and vulgar and I have to keep a vigilant watch against them much against my will.

I am keeping my chin smart and smooth shaved as if I had city company to meet with the help of razors blunt and painful though they may be, borrowed from block I where the Andhra friends are lodged. The jail barbers are a terror I think I saw their equal in the outer world in only one man in Salem recently. The good barbers seem to be either too virtuous or too clever to be caught; they do not come to jail.

The Brahmin cook is as bad as his professional counterpart in the outer world. The rice and *kolambu* are unparalleled for dirt, hair wool sand stone and horrid taste. The cook is not responsible for the cleaning of the rice and other stuffs and no one is responsible for the taste. The Sikhs have got one of themselves to cook for them, Nidhan Singh. He has but little assistance. But he gets the rations correctly does not allow others or himself to steal and he cooks clean and puts his heart in it. But it is unfair to compare a poor convict Brahmin cook with a gentleman from the Andamans with a life term hanging round his brave neck for conspiracy against Government.

*Bande Mataram* comes from him every morning to me with two thin chapatties he makes for me, and again at breakfast when he comes to give me some of his dholl. *Iam Iam* say I sometimes, and sometimes *Bande Mataram*. Can and May are about only the two English words I can recognise.

when he speaks. The rest is all something which only his brave heart conceives and understands—not I. I must make one exception. I discovered by a process of persevering induction that 'pay' in Nidan Singh's vocabulary means 'give'. He pays dholl, he pays chapati, the deputy jailor pays vegetables and other rations. You pay a letter or a note if that is ever permitted in a British jail. Life were pleasant and India free if we were all brave and honest men knowing but little English like Nidan Singh.

Let me now spin for a while. Little does Ghandhi know that I have come to love this dear wheel in my cell veritably like a younger brother. His heart would beat and his eyes glow with pleasure if he saw it.

16—1—22 Monday —This morning immediately the Prison King left this block after his weekly inspection, some kind of recalcitrance on the part of two of the Sikh prisoners led to a sudden noise and rally of warders and handcuffs. The two men have been hand-cuffed and taken to the close prison.

Last night was as bad as any other night for my asthma. I believe I must eschew dholl even in my mid-day meal. So I told the Superintendent this morning when he was here, and asked him if he could give me a pint of milk and loaf-bread instead of rice and dholl. He said he could do it.

Understand that Lalaji has been released by Government. This may be good or bad. Cannot tell from here what effect it would have on the morale of the Punjab people.

The Madras City Hartal aftermath has commenced and I am told about 30 men (but not any well-known persons)



have been arrested. It appears true that Thiagaraya chetty's house was besieged by a mob.

I am told I don't know whether it is true, that some question has been asked about me in the Madras Legislative Council. Wish that nothing by way of attempts to get me favourable terms is done. It would be a waste of human undertaking if I should flash in the pan by a premature release.

17 1 22. Tuesday — The noise of the Prison King's boots woke me up at about 11 last night. My sleep must have been very light to have been disturbed by such a little noise. Bastriar was reading and he was told he should sleep and not read so late. I woke up early and did my prayers. Had to wait long for the cell to be opened. I asked the chief warder why it was opened so late. Holiday to-day. Why what for? Prince of Wales said he and smiled.

The Deputy Jailor promised to send me a knife and spoon for slicing my bread for the noon meal and for taking my milk and sago in the morning.

Strolled in the open air for 30 minutes in the morning after ablutions and then span for an hour. V. K. Vijayaraghavan had sent 2 wheels and I gave the heavier one to Muhammad Ghouse myself using the lighter one. I am using the heavy one since I returned from the hospital. It is so much nicer than the other wheel. It is a marvel of smoothness. What would prison life have been but for the wheel!

Read Kural and Bible last night. Skipped through Paul Fichard's *Scourage of Christ* which Ganesh has kindly sent me. It is a repetition of the well known attacks on current Christianity opposing the life of modern Christians to Christ's

life and teachings. The whole book is composed in epigrams. The pitch of the epigrams sometimes suit the matter, sometimes the composition wobbles. The get up which Ganesh gives to his publications is far out of proportion to the value of the books.

The Superintendent appears to have instructed my removal to hospital again. I told the Sub Assistant Surgeon that if I had a choice in the matter I would prefer to remain in the cell. The bugs in the hospital are too much for me. The night pots kept in continual use throughout the nights make it practically like sleeping in the verandah of a big latrine. Add to this, the groans or the delirium of some of the patients get on my nerves. Though it is solitary confinement here in the cell, it is better than the other place. Did a little Socrates into Tamil Ramayansm in the afternoon. Felt very weak. Evening meal at 4 p. m. and locked in at 5 p. m. for the Prince's sake. Span till it grew dark. The wheel is a poem of smoothness and beauty, Kural in the night.

Heard a wonderful story of 2,000 persons arrested in Bombay and brought over to Madras. If only such things were true!

The latest canard is that a "Collector" has been murdered at Salem. These stories indicate the prevailing yearning for violence of some sort by somebody or other.

18-1 22 Wednesday —In spite of strenuous prayers, the vision of the true God has not yet come to me. It is a hard task to keep the wandering mind steady, and even after that, the mind does not find its real objective but dwells on family, self, friends and country, and formulates desires.

Instead of purifying itself. My only purpose in prayer at this stage should be to struggle for a vision of the Supreme one and if I see him once, then the rest will take care of itself. I now understand what the ancient Rishis meant when they did *tapas* for God to "appear before them.

Non-co-operation is not a means to a political end but a Dharma by itself. To abstain from co-operating with wrong is an absolute duty. This is so not simply because thereby we shall evict the Englishmen. It is an absolute duty to release one-self from the net of wrong in which we are entangled. It is not a programme for the time being or for any particular period in politics. It is a duty for all time to refuse to participate in the degradation of one's people, whether you succeed in enfranchising it within the period fixed by the Congress or not. It is not a desperate remedy resolved upon, because other remedies have failed but an absolute and eternal moral duty even as honesty and charity are duties irrespective of result or occasion. To refuse to co-operate in the process of reducing ourselves to foreign rule and in the maintenance of it is the natural law and instinct. We got to forget this law of national life and cast our minds into the terrible slough of unfelt slavery. Now that we have rediscovered the rule of life, it is our duty absolute and for all time to obey it.

Something I believe is going on outside. The Superintendent came up to my cell and enquired about my health. He said he would give butter for my toast. He advised me to take the toast sold as hot toast except in the afternoon.

Two more canards, one that the Police Sub-Inspector of Yanambady has been done to death, and another our Chief

Warden's son, a constable in the Madras City Police, has turned non co operator and has resigned. The latter causes great glee among the warders who heartily dislike their chief.

I just understand that Sastriar is a diabetic patient. He looks rather poor in health and not as cheerful as he might be expected to be.

Poor Thevan, who is the serving prisoner in the hospital, is so kind and regular in his attentions and so honest. The more I see the so called criminals close at hand here, the more convinced I am that the system of laws, trials, and punishments which we have adopted is wrong from the root upwards.

19 1-22 Thursday —The Sub-Asst. Surgeon was good enough to enquire about my health from across the wall as I was going to the latrine. Learning I was free from fresh boils, he spoke even as if he had himself been the inventor of the vaccine with which I was infected. Pasteur himself could not have been more self-conscious. He told me that loaf-bread was a cure for constipation when I suggested that I might take some raw tomatoes. He advised me not to press for anything now. Tomatoes may increase my asthma! The true reason seems to be a dread of his Superintendent.

The Vellore Jail Unpublished Gazette brings the following news —The comments are mine. De Valera is still asking his people to reject the Treaty. The Bharatpur Magistrate flogged some political prisoners in the presence of other prisoners and this has caused great agitation. Such magistrates are truly our friends. Several arrests in Kurnool. Salem is not doing ill. Five persons summoned for civil disobedience in Atur.

C. Anantaiah is in remand Vasudevayya is in jail (6 months R I) Tirupathur men, Wahab Sahib and Rama swami Iyer 6 months each former rigorous latter simple Who is Srinivasan who is said to have resigned from the Police? Honorary Magistrates stray resignations from Tenkasi and Thruvallore are only symptoms of a fresh awakening not much by themselves 3,500 volunteers were in prison in Calcutta up to the middle of January Hakim Ajmal Khan said in his Presidential address that Egypt had adopted the Indian method of non-co-operation Pandit Malaviya's son Govind was given 18 months rigorous along with his cousin Krishnakant. Afterwards reduced to 6 months simple. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty too is arrested in Calcutta

Fire opened in Madras and half a dozen killed because stones were thrown at a police officer's car

I get confirmation for my suspicions that there was some of agitation outside about my food and health in jail. People are so sadly mistaken about what they ought to do. I am here hungering not for food but to learn that strenuous work is going on outside. Our hunger and thirst for more and more men to come into the jail. People seem to imagine as if only a few of us unfortunates have to be in jail and so we should be helped to serve our terms out as comfortably as possible. So they take kindly in great in our jail life and do their best to make our imprisonment as bearable as possible by agitating about our health, our food etc. I wish they realised that we are here for a cause which demands their immediate attention independently of our own food and comfort in jail. They would if it were less of repression as if it were an evil to be met immediately.

by Round Table Conferences They would then welcome the battle given by Government

Poor Sastriar has developed dysentery. If he goes to hospital, he will be put on rice-water which is the only form of light diet within the ambit of the Sub-Arzt Surgeon For any form of milk, the Prison King's sign manual is necessary

I just heard at the latrine the bitter wailings of a prisoner "O this *kolambu*, without salt, without chillies, mere potwash fluid, they take Government pay and also our food—Will God not turn His eyes to these crimes?" But I suppose even under Swaraj such corruption must be expected Who is dishonest now except our own men? How and when the hearts of our men will be changed and brought into the path of right conduct, Heaven knows!

I was pushing away from my mind as trespassers the thoughts that came up each time the familiar whistle of the passing railway train came across the prison bars But to-day as I was at my evening prayers the sweet voice of the village *Nagasaram* that came from some happy home in the hamlets lying outside the prison-wall, brought with it such an irresistible rush of happy recollections that I could not for long get them out The music of these pipes is to me and I suppose to every man and woman in this land a sound that brings on its back a world of sweet recollections, a *vahana* of happy youth, of joy and hope As I let myself wander for a moment in this happy dream-world, I could not resist my tears Yet God has not spared of his good things for me Love immeasurable has been my share from wife, family friends and all But who can feel satisfied and say it is enough?

These thoughts render me weak. All my strength is needed for the battle, and I cannot afford to let my mind wander thus into the garden of sweet flowers that ripen only into tears. All that I shall say to my God is, if she is anywhere and is still subject to pleasure and pain keep her happy and free from pain or sadness and give me strength to bear and perform my duties

20-1 22. Friday —It is a rare privilege to live safely in such strange company. On one side passing over Mid Ghouse, are always some 2 or 3 men sentenced by revengful Courts or under the disciplinary jurisdiction of the jail Superintendent to solitary and dark cells. A thick wooden door is drawn over the ordinary barred cell door to keep off light and air. What is left is the hole in the opposite wall and two tiny round holes in the roof leading into the curved tubing supposed to act as ventilators. The warders are less cruel than the regulations and often leave the wooden door undrawn when they do not expect the Superintendent to come and see. I am placed in one of these rooms. But the wooden door is not drawn. Just now there is a young Afghani (son of Ambur) sturdy bright and handsome as a boy by God and condemned to this kind of imprisonment by man for some outburst of animal spirits some assault in company with friends as he says, or it may be for a more serious deviation from the law and he is now kept in a solitary cell locked in day and night except for a few minutes to take in his food and water three a day and a heavy wooden door is drawn across the front bars of the cell door and bolted so that God's light and air may not reach him. Luckily there is a hole on the other side of the wall 9 inches in height and a yard long, which is not provided with any wooden or other shutter but is only barred. Next

is a Moplah undergoing by jail rules a month's solitary confinement in the course of his ten years' sentence of hard labour for manslaughter. He is not shut out from light by the wooden door, but only locked in.

On the other side, beyond Sastriar's cell, are four young men awaiting death at the gallows. Kept in closest confinement, under special guard day and night, sturdy youths who are as cheerful as soldiers in cantonment, always sitting close against the cell door, for it is the nearest approach to freedom and light, and doing nothing, counting the hours and the tedious days that keep pending their routine petitions to Government. They watch and sometimes I believe jeer at me, in natural jealousy, as I move about without a guard, enjoying comparative luxuries such as going to the tap to bathe or wash my dish or bring water and pass in front of them, Brahmin—clean and in white clothes as if to mock at their condition. Behind my cell comes the constant chatter and monotonous jokes with which another set of condemned unfortunates pass their days and nights awaiting the gallows. I have not seen their faces for I should not stroll behind this block though the compound is the same, but their voices, their foul abuses, and oft-repeated attempts at humour, and their occasional prayers of desperation and utterances of God's name, are as familiar to me, as the activities of fellow tenants of the same house should be. The most prosaic thing is the chatter of the warders keeping guard over the condemned men, and at nights it reaches an intolerable pitch. If I complain, the chief warder I suppose will punish them or at least prohibit them from making noise, not out of deference for my sleep, but because sentry should not enjoy themselves by chatting, according to the jail rules, which to



this modified Javert is a Dharma by itself independent of causes or effects. But this would be only to make myself a hated object among these poor semi-starved fellows who think they are free men, but have practically to live the same life as the prisoners over whom they are supposed to keep guard.

Then at dead of night comes the convict—night watchman's heavy tread (for the shoes are all fitting and heavy) and himself a prisoner often for a long term for murder or other heinous offences. Watch after watch, he stands in front of my cell and throws the light of his lantern into it to see if I have escaped or am safe inside! These convict warders, convict overseers and convict night watchmen are a curious hierarchy worthy of study. They are given white clothes reaching to the ends of arms and legs unlike the ordinary prisoners a leather belt and a white headgear. The convict number instead of hanging by a string round the neck on a shabby tin disk is engraved on a little brass shield pinned to the vest on the right chest, and kept shining like a medal or other emblem of honour. The higher ranks of this hierarchy go with a baton as emblem of discipline and power. The convict warder gets his rice food and I understand a rupee a month which is banked for him without interest against his day of release. That is his pay for his work. They get remission of 4 to 6 days in the month. Almost all the most arduous and responsible work including supervision over prisoners' work and watch at nights is got out of these convict officials and they are efficient according to the scale of the Prison Code, for any disobedience, impertinence, delinquency, default or displeasure means summary removal from

the convict hierarchy and degradation to the status of convict prisoner, over whom he had just before exercised tyrannic discipline. This fall is so much dreaded that the convict warder is prepared to do anything to avoid it. Hence the efficiency. This is the slave system, made self-supporting, even in the matter of supervision.

Sastriar's dysentery is not better and he is just gone to hospital.

The promised butter came. Truly the niggardliness of the doles here enhances the value of things. I learnt here how to take the butter off and deal with it so that not a pin's head (for it would be a quite a decent fraction of the whole) may not be left unconsumed.

Had a fifth injection of the Vaccine for boils. I understand it is a maximum dose to-day.

Spinning. Did a little of Sociates, Ramayanam. Finding of Sita and her trials.

In the evening, the jail clerk brought me the expected letter from home. No enclosure from Rangoon from the guls, but Krishnaswami and Narasimham and my brother write. It is just the same as with the sugar and the butter. The privation in respect of letters has served to enhance the appetite for them, and I chewed and consumed every word and line of the letter.

With to day, I have made one month in jail. In time values also, the prison is not the same as outside.

21—1—22 Saturday.—The injection gave a kind of heavy head yesterday but its main effect seems to be this evening. Feel very weak and unable to do anything.

22—1—22 Sunday —The congee in the evening is a regular battle with the fly. With these flies and the radish leaf and unbroken dboll kolambu every day no wonder there is a lot of dysentery and persistent stomach disease, in the Jail the former carrying the infection and the latter keeping the bowels irritated. If once these flies have a taste of your dish they get really mad over it and will not go whatever you may do. There is much that can be observed in the Vellore Jail and usefully recorded about these insects: the hours of their activity their migrations their temper under changing conditions and the nature of their hunger and thirst.

Read some of the most beautiful parts of Sundarakan-  
dam yesterday. The affection which Sita has for brave  
faithful, selfless Lakshmana is so beautifully conceived and  
expressed. It is a delicate mixture of love and reverence and  
maternal affection the full beauty of which no one but a  
Hindu poet can conceive and delineate and no one but a  
Hindu Grahasta can fully understand.

Had a clean Brahmin slave. The barber was an old  
man quite a character. He hails from Tirupahur. Was con-  
victed by a jury of the Salem Sessions Court on a false  
charge and given 3 years. Again after long interval sent by  
the Chittoor Sessions Court on another false charge for  
another 5 years. O why have these Iyyawars [Brahmin  
sub inspectors of police] become so bad and malicious? When  
will these Policemen be abolished altogether? I tell you  
cases were all false but, for a real thief and robber there  
are certainly. And the police are never a try to protect people  
against them.

"Yes, yes there are thieves no doubt. Thank God and your grace, I have property and lands and cattle. My harvest was once stolen by thieves. Police men there may be, but they should be honest."

"Why did the Sub Inspector bring a false charge against you?" I asked.

"He asked me for the milch cow I had. I told him I would give myself or my son to him as slave, but this was a calf born and brought up in my house and I could not give it away for my life, and he kept the grudge and got me in when there was a robbery somewhere."

"What is your term yet to be done?"

"I have eight months more and three years police surveillance."

"So you have to bribe the policemen for three years to keep out of jail again?"

"No, why should I bribe them? I won't. Let the beggars watch me. I am not going to steal sheep or rob. I have lands and house and property by the grace of God. I have a plan to ask the Collector to give me a book wherein to take the policeman's signature so that they may not cheat me."

He was not a bad barber and was proud of his cunning too. "Why are such good Mahathmas like you to do tapas here in this place meant for thieves and robbers? Won't God help us? I have now spent 10 years of my life in prison, Sir, and I am going away in eight months."

The old man finished my head rather in a hurry saying he had lots of people to attend to in the kitchen. It was necessary he should attend to the men in the kitchen for it

is there he could beg and get some more food to satisfy his hunger.

This morning my weight was taken. It was 98 lbs. It was 104 on entry. 6 lbs in one month is not a negligible decrease. The Sub-Assistant Surgeon looked rather puzzled and very unwillingly made the entry on my ticket.

One must admire the bearing of the chief warder Shakh Madar Sahib. Every jail warder and prisoner however they may dislike him has a wholesome fear of him. In fact he seems to be the only efficient man in the jail. The other day he saw me sweep my cell and he said. Why do you do this? Where is Narayanasami [a convict waterman and man of all work in this block]? He will do it for you. I spoke the usual things about dignity of labour and the great convenience of knowing to help oneself. He agreed and said

why, I know and do every household work cooking sweeping, etc. This of course convinced me that even great men ought to do these things. He gets a salary of Rs. 45 a month and does not show much education. But his bearing is that of a High Native State official.

21-22 Monday — The Royal Visit. So roused from bed at 5 A.M. You keep all your things out in the verandah and stand below for His Majesty to pass along and inspect his subjects and all their belongings. This gives an opportunity for the cell to be cleared up thoroughly as far as I am concerned. His Majesty is accompanied by D. Little and by the jailor and the deputy jailor. The Deputy Jailor will be Jailor during the former's absence on leave for a month and the new Deputy Jailor a short Brahmana a typical Government servant who has come from some other

al also formed part of the Royal suite "Are you all right?" Fairly well, Thank you' 'No more boils?' 'No' "What about the other thing?" Dr. Little helped His Majesty by adding 'Asthma' 'Yes it is there, but mild' 'Are you taking medicine for it or do you manage without it?' 'No, I don't take medicine, I depend simply on regulation of diet' 'Yes, it is better not to take medicine for it' I enquired if it were his instructions to lock me up day and night in the solitary cell just like prisoners under special punishment He enquired about the hours, and said it was his intention that we should be allowed to be out for 5 hours in the day, 6 to 8 and 10½ to 12 in the morning and again 4½ to 6 in the evening This means about an hour and a half for each meal and for the latrine and the washing of plates and washing and drying of towels and clothes, airing of bed, storing of water, cleaning up of cell, etc I told him that it was then much the same as the case of the special punishment prisoners He answered 'No, they are supposed to be in most of the day'—whatever that might mean

The practice of keeping the condemned prisoners in solitary cells the whole day, without work or recreation or any moral or spiritual ministration is an evil system. They remain thus for some months on account of the petitions sent up in the usual course to Government, local and Indian They soon lose the chastening effect of hearing the judicial sentence pronounced and are left to their own brutal instincts The warders do not pay any attention to them except to see that they do not escape I have every reason to think that some of them get into horrible ways The language I hear from the block behind my cell, where one of the men kept appears to be a masterful gallana, always

keeping up a conversation with his fellow unfortunates in the other cells in the block, leaves me no doubt in the matter.

I do not see why they should not be made to do some work in the open air during the period of the pendency of their appeals and petitions. The work may be light, if there is any compunction about giving hard labour to a condemned man. It cannot be said that it is too difficult or risky to let them have the freedom necessary for work because the risk is taken with the same man when once their sentence is commuted to transportation for life or imprisonment for 20 years.

Wrote some letters to be sent home. I imagine that the vagabond railway train, whistling as it passes the jail wall to mock in a good humoured way at my prison bars. I suppose it is some level crossing near by.

Four non-co-operators have arrived: one with simple imprisonment but with bar fetters transferred from Bellary three others of whom Maharajagada Ramakrishnayya is one. They have been placed in the close prison called here "Peldu Ganji Office" a big block of single cells. They have made up their minds to isolate me from every one.

Abdul Wahab of Tirupathur is here as I see from a petition in which some one has asked for an interview with him. The petition was brought for enquiry to this block by mistake.

21-1-22, Tuesday — Non payment of taxes is going on in Gunur District. I hear in South Canara also. Disobedience is going on in a slow way in Tamil Nadu. The Moderates I hear have met in conference and increased their demands. How lazily these Moderates follow the pack. The block

and sacrifices that go before them cuts a deep rut along which they cannot but be dragged

The Superintendent seems bent on taking me into hospital again. Why, I cannot see. I must make it clear to him that it is only as a punishment I must go to that place to sleep among the bugs and chamber pots. If he is anxious about my loss of weight, I can take the evening temperature for him better than the convalescent attendant or the compounder and at least as well as his Sub Assistant Surgeon.

Strolled up and down in the open till regulation time 8 A. M., and spun till 8-15 A. M.

Finished my monthly letter to everybody. We are allowed one letter a month only. So we make each letter practically a budget of letters addressed to many persons and sent it to the office. Finished Sundarakandam. What a beautiful book! I remember my father telling me that people make parayaram of Sundarakandam, when they pray for the success of any enterprise. Will our Sita be found in the Asoka Garden?

I have just written to Dr. Rajan that the idea that much money has been entrusted for Swadeshi work to District Secretaries and others and that if they go to prison everything may go into confusion and be lost, is a dangerous idea. Money is a good thing but often it becomes a clog in the wheel. We may save the money and lose our enterprise! No, No, the die is cast and we must go on.

We ought all to know that Swaraj will not at once or think, even for a long time to come, be better government or greater happiness for the people. Elections and their corruptions, injustice and the power and tyranny of wealth and



inefficiency of administration will make a hell of life so soon as freedom is given to us. Men will look regretfully back to the old regime of comparative justice, and efficient peaceful more or less honest administration. The only thing gained will be that as a race we will be saved from dishonour and subordination. Hope lies only in universal education by which right conduct, fear of god and love will be developed among the citizens from childhood. It is only if we succeed in this, that Swaraj will mean happiness. Otherwise it will mean the grinding injustices and tyranny of wealth. What a beautiful world it would be, if everybody were just and God fearing and realised the happiness of loving others. Yet there is more practical hope for the ultimate consummation of this ideal in India than elsewhere.

To-day's joke is an invitation card from the Central College Day Committee for the 28th January. It was very kind and nice on somebody's part to have sent me the card duly addressed to the Vellore Jail in the first instance, knowing that I was a convicted prisoner.

2-1-20 Wednesday — Nidhan Singh the Sikh prisoner who has undertaken the baking of chappatties for all the Sikhs along with Shair Mahomed Congress Worker from Old Delhi who do the chappatties for Muslims have been sent to this block on account of mess and small parties in their block. Nidhan Singh coughs badly but won't take hospital medicine. They are refused at 4 in the morning and let out to go to the kitchen. I have no more cheerful cooks in all my long trouble with cooks of all sorts. Brahmins even to be born cooks in the other blocks artists they seem born to be wicked at their work.

Have not seen a more worthless or a more idiotic chatterbox than the Warder now in charge of this block during Perumal's temporary engagement in the kitchen. Perumal of course likes to be Warder in the kitchen which is the Garden of Eden in the jail.

Spinning and translation of Socrates' Defence. 'The Collector of Income tax is still pursuing me. He has sent a notice to fill up my sources of income! .

It is a fine art in cruelty to make the gangs of prisoners work in the jail gardens and produce all kinds of nice vegetables, but give them tamarind soup in which float only fibrous bits of stalk and leaves of radish all the year round. What happens to the other things that grow, whether it is lost among the systematic robbery of officials or sold for money to contractors and high officials I cannot tell. There is a practice here of putting whole grain dholl instead of the usual husked and cleaned dholl for the soup or *kolambu*. It appears it is claimed to be good for the prisoners' health, but the men themselves complain that it is worse than horses' food. I fear the practice has arisen out of a desire for economy and not so much out of original ideas of dietetic hygiene.

The Superintendent's calculation that we have 5 hours outside the cells daily is quite wrong. Most of the time during the three breaks is taken up by the eating and washing of dishes. Keeping the cell door unlocked is by itself not much beyond satisfaction to the soul, it cannot bring in more fresh air into the lungs or give play to the muscles, unless one is given time to move about. To-day I found that my toast and

milk and the battle with the flies take just a few minutes less than an hour and then there are the plates to wash and the cell door to be immediately swept out otherwise more vermin to keep you company

26-1-22 Thursday — My stomach has gone from one extreme to the other now. Instead of constipation, I have loose motions and have to get up during nights. To appeal to the doctor means probably change of diet and probably going into hospital. So let me give a trial to nature yet.

Spinning more than before.

The Superintendent with his two Sub Asst Surgeons called at my cell to-day and enquired about my health. He was concerned about my loose motions, and told the Sub Asst. to give me a small dose of bismuth. He also ordered raw tomatoes to be given me. He told me to make tomato sandwiches with bread and butter with a gusto, which suggested that it is a great delicacy with them. During the talk with the Superintendent the Sub Asst gave a beautiful story which I wish had been true, that I generally suffer from constipation but once in 2 or 3 days there is wash out with loose motions. This had of course to be contradicted by me. The young man is so eager to please his boss. The Superintendent has become very nice and has changed from his original royal reticence to active benevolence keeping of course enough of the bureaucratic feeling to save his system from degenerating into common humanity.

The amusing part of the even was the pretty manner in which the little doctor went on interpreting in an explanatory way in Tamil what the big doctor was telling me in English, quite forgetting I suppose that I could understand English.

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ever in prison from which I saved so many clients of mine to her delight and pride.

These idle thoughts I occupied myself with while getting over the hard breathing that worried me these days in the afternoons after my bath. Though the nights are free, I see that my constitution has become weak and has not been able to throw off the asthma—the least exertion brings it in a daytime.

N. K. Vijayaraghavan has become the diligent consul on behalf of all of us jail birds. He has just sent a nice tin box with all shaving tackle. I see he is sending a bottle of coconut oil for the Zamindar.

The Jailor who has gone on leave has mislaid the telegram I sent and the note for cloves and other things which I wanted bought for me.

How beautiful are the verses sung by Pattinathu Pillaiar over his mother's body. The sudden outburst of affection in the midst of the stern asceticism of this great man is remarkably beautiful and the simplicity of his wall goes to the bottom of human nature. The beauty of Pattinathu Pillaiar's poetry is the simplicity of his style and vocabulary. He has woven his verses in the language of the man in the street. How one wishes his poetry embraced other topics besides the one theme of his life and song, the vanity of the things of the earth and the yearning to be one with the Supreme Being.

93-1-22, Saturday —At a little after eight o'clock last night, there was a sudden disturbance in the verandah towards the cells occupied by the condemned prisoners and I heard the noise of 20 blows and kicks. I was in the cell



Venkatasubbayya called at my cell and told me that he has been put in the stores to assist the Deputy Jailor. That is a great promotion.

Sastriar has come back from hospital. He is very weak. His diabetes is knocking him down. Maharajagada Ramakrishnayya is I understand doing well in the close prison block.

The cotton from the jail plants is so beautiful to spin Narayanaswami (a prisoner for receiving stolen property) who is working as waterman in this block) brought me a nice silver made of it and I finished it with avidity at once.

I understand the Superintendent objects to the sending of more than one letter enclosed in a cover as a single letter. I don't think he is right in his interpretation, of one letter to mean that only one person should be written to. But what does it matter. He makes the rule and may interpret it as he likes. He has not however interfered with the letter I sent last in which I have enclosed letters to Dr. Rajan and Mahathmaji and to Papa and Lakshmi at Rangoon.

But for my stomach being in bad condition I don't think a prince could enjoy a better breakfast than what I am given and 8 oz. loaf of bread sliced by myself and nicely toasted 1 oz. of good fresh butter a few fresh tomatoes and

pint of milk with a cup of water heated over my candle. The meal is a right royal one which should keep my body quite contented and make me fat in a short time. The raw tomatoes is enough to make me long to come back to the Vellore jail even after I am released.

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*Notes*—After a few days the travelling began to weary. As I began to be the bread saw. The butter got to be adulterated and stolen from.

29—1—22 Sunday —Notice for the Executive Committee meeting of the Tamil Provincial Congress Committee has been sent to me and Sastriar They meet at Pantulu Iyer's house at Kumbakonam on 31st instant The subjects show a humdrum routine and no cavalry progress But I suppose nothing better can be done with a people whose daily concerns and anxieties are all absorbing and to whom country is a mere connotation of space for family activities

Was weighed again this morning 98 lbs without my upper cloth and 99 lbs with it, i.e., no change from the last weighment Bread and butter and tomatoes seems now to be given to many of our friends The one thing we want is curd or good buttermilk to which having got used all through life our stomachs rebel now against the privation and get irritated with other diet

My breakfast (bread, butter, tomatoes and milk) takes full one hour, the eating alone, 12 to 1 p.m. It is easy gulp down rice and curry but to get through tough dry toast (which I am asked to take cold) is a low and tedious business However if one does not mind the time, there can be no complaint that it is not a full breakfast

Finished Illarayiyal in Kural

Did Socrates to day My loose motions have not stopped The Sub-Assistant Surgeon forgot to send the powders for my stomach both yesterday and to-day

30—1—22 —Worse last night The Sub Assistant Surgeon came at about 10 in the night and brought the powder He does not know that arrowroot congee is a good astringent diet for loose bowels One of my neighbours was executed early this morning, a sturdy young fellow



I happened to be in the Jailor's office this morning to sign for some purchases made for me out of my money. I found him in a state of fury storming and fuming against two non-co-operators who complained about the conduct of a convict warder who had pushed down and injured an old man, a fellow prisoner (not a non-co-operator). "Who are you to interfere in these matters?" Put him in the distant cell and teach him a sound lesson. "They were quiet for some days they are up again" and so on he was ejaculating from his chair. The two non-co-operators thus addressed were in the verandah. Then the Jailor went out and before my eyes in the presence of numerous people without provocation and in a barbarous manner began hitting one of them (Subba Rao one of the most gulleless and ardent of Satyagrahis that I have ever met) in the face and cheeks and losing his temper more and more let himself go thoroughly. He then returned to his room and sat down in his chair, near which I was seated. Everybody present was upset by this public and indecent conduct.

The Jailor then began to recover himself and seemed to realise the foolishness of his conduct. There was not much repentance but there was fear that his offences had been witnessed by one too many. He appealed to me about the unnecessary interference of the men in other people's affairs that they had to maintain discipline in jail, that rough handling of prisoners was necessary and so on. I told him I did not mind all that but his conduct in assaulting the young man was wrong and he should apologise. "You have witnessed it and I do not wish the matter to go up" he mumbled. I called in Subba Rao who came and bursting into tears said — "I sincerely tell you I do not mind your

beating me or kicking me. Pray God bless you.' I could not bear to see a fellow prisoner treated brutally by the convict warder. I am pleased so much that I am receiving blows on that account. I am only sorry you did not beat me more." A warder, a young fellow put on office duty to help the remission clerk, began sobbing for sheer sympathy. Then the Jailor said "I am sorry for what I did". Those who know the brutality that is attained by a not overscrupulous officer in a jail holding 2,000 convicts of all kinds can realise the moral achievement of such a statement coming from his mouth in the presence of many officials and others. Subba Rao continued haranguing in the same strain as before and no one dared interrupt him. Then a warder told him, "Now that he has begged pardon let it end, please go." The matter I thought ended there when I came away.

I took my breakfast and was cleaning my cell floor of the bread crumbs when the Jailor put in his appearance and requested me to go to the close prison as all of them had refused to take their food. This was the first time such an appeal for non official interference was made. I asked if it was necessary I should go. He said yes. I went accordingly and found a determined body of people who said they had resolved to appeal to God and to abstain from their noon day meal. A Sikh prisoner had joined them who said vengeance was the law. I told him he belonged to a different school of thought from us and that I would talk to him separately on the subject of vengeance. After a prolonged discussion, I was able to convince most of the men that they ought not to exhibit any expressions of dissatisfaction with their lot, either by words or deeds such as hunger striking. The rest said they were not convinced but agreed to follow my advice.

because I gave it. The Sikh prisoner was the first to say that they should accept my word. A Mussalman who was at first terribly opposed to all ideas of surrender afterwards fully agreed with me and helped me a great deal. So also Abdul Badsha of Vellore helped much. They all finally sat down for breakfast at half past two to the delight of every body and I thanked them and came back. The Jailor was outside and was greatly relieved.

There is no doubt the Jailor was in terrible fear of the consequence of his thoughtless action in publicly beating Subba Rao and did not want the strike to reach the ears of the Superintendent. His appeal for my interference was therefore in their self interest. But the prestige of the Jail Official was thoroughly broken by the incident and my going into the close prison and coming out was evidently taken by the whole Jail as a triumph for "Swadesi". Swadesi both adjective and noun is a term applied by the ordinary prisoners to all non co-operator prisoners.

We do great injury to the movement and impede its progress by doing anything which will make the world imagine that prison-life is hard. We have come for a great cause on which we shall concentrate our thoughts and efforts and not fritter them away in the reform of Jail administration and the purification of subordinate officials. By our struggling over these matters we divert the attention of the general public also into the minor channels during a critical period in the movement. Again we give satisfaction to those who treat us cruelly by exhibiting symptoms of pain. How many hundreds of common prisoners patiently bear the same treatment as is accorded to us if not worse. May we who call

to be better than these prisoners show comparative weakness? rather, should we prove to have greater strength to bear. I was glad I had an opportunity to go to the close prison where I saw quite a crowd of fine young non co operators including one from Bellary undergoing simple imprisonment but having bar fetters. Latterly he got freed from the fetters along with the others and became the most persevering and best spinner in the Jail. He had been a jail warder himself before he became a non-co-operator. I understand that all the prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment in the close prison are made to carry their night pots [chatties without lids] from their cells every morning to the opposite corner of the jail grounds, a distance of about a furlong. They have to do this mostly in a hurry and it is a feat to carry them all the way without spilling the contents over themselves. Further they have no facilities for bathing. The carrying of night soil is generally felt to be work of a degrading nature and to make high-caste political prisoners do it as a form of cruelty which if deliberately intended has a finesse worthy of admiration. It is impossible to see what grounds there could be for putting so many of the political prisoners in the close prison and subject them to this if it is a discipline specially ordered for that place. The close prison is intended for the dangerous or recalcitrant convicts of the worst type. Apparently the jail officials place the political prisoners, some of them even simple term men in that category not because they are a danger to Government but because they try to expose the corruptions and cruelties of jail administration.

31-1-22 Tuesday — Barrister Lakshminarayana and Narasimhachariar were observed carrying urine pots along the road in front of our cells. They are not in the close prison.

but are in block 1 and are undergoing simple terms. They appear to have taken to carrying their pots as a protest against the insult and inconvenience deliberately imposed on the friends in the close prison.

The Superintendent appears to have spoken very harshly to Mr. Choudhuri whose health was very bad when he complained that no adequate attention was being paid to it. He said "the remedy is in your own hands. You can give security and go. We don't mind if you lose weight or die in jail." This was the substance of what as reported to me, had been said by the Superintendent. This might not be civilization or humanity but it is the natural attitude of enemies at their wits end and we should not be worried over it. The fact is that the distinction between political prisoners and moral degenerates is a distinction not understood by the Indian Bureaucracy and much less by the Indian jail officials. The jail code knows no such distinctions. Special instructions are elastic and vary with the temper of the officials issuing them and the agents actually carrying them out. There is some vague sense of distinction in the case of simple term men but the finest among us all are perhaps those undergoing rigorous imprisonment. Whether it is a simple or rigorous term in many cases depends only on the whim and fancy of the particular magistrate. Those undergoing rigorous imprisonment are not ordinarily looked upon as political prisoners at all by the jail officials. The political character of the prisoner is recognised only as an additional evil and not as marking out the absence of moral depravity.

How false are all the arguments about labourers doing heavy work needing a drink of liquor in the evening! The

mendacity of the apologies and pleas of government officials and departments in this matter is proved by the rigid and successful enforcement of government rules totally prohibiting liquor in jails where such heavy work is extracted from prisoners without detriment to health or slackening of efficiency. I remember once I heard a missionary talking of the need for the poor scavenger to get over the smell and offence of his profession by taking a drink. All this is bosh, I see here scavengers, doing their work beautifully and in perfect condition of body and nerves without any liquor to console them. The whole case of those who plead for moderate drink as opposed to prohibition can be exploded by showing them the conditions obtaining in Government Jails. Jail discipline is a triumphant proof on behalf of prohibition as well as vegetarianism. Subba Rao came to my cell this morning to tell me that the Jailor is really repentent and requesting me to see that the assault on him may not reach the press. It is a wonderful sight to see him thus sincerely labouring to save the man who assaulted and insulted him in public. He says and I quite believe it, that Providence brought about the incident so that it may change the Jailor's heart. How beautiful is the path of charity and love, when once we gather wisdom and strength to walk on it, rejecting the temptations of the way of anger and of what passes for manliness and sternness.

1—2—22 Wednesday — Three others of our friends from Block 1 took their turn at the night pots to-day. I saw them bravely marching along the road in front of my block with the big chatties on their shoulders, their pots are big, being the common ward pots and not the small ones kept in single cells.

I understand this voluntary act on the part of the simple term non-co-operators of 1st block was taken to the notice of the Prison King and he said ' Let them take, don't prevent them " So, he proposes to allow them to go on thus and does not mean to alter the conditions prevailing in the close prison where the rigorous term men are confined

I thought long as to why this Satyagraha on the part of Mr Lakshminarayana and others created anger and self will in the opposite party and not that effect which Satyagraha must immediately produce. After sometime I was more than ever convinced by this apparent failure that the law of love and suffering cannot be wrong. We often make errors in our experiments. We might as well think that a balloon going up in the air disproves the law of gravity. There must be some admixture of anger or other impurity in this otherwise brave act of Mr Lakshminarayana and his friends, which produced anger and brutality on the part of men on whom it was intended to produce compunction. The purest determination and freedom from all stain of anger on our part is necessary to produce the beautiful effects of suffering and love. The human soul is a delicate mechanism and its workings are as perfect and accurate as that of any electrical machine. However if what has been begun in a fit of angry determination is persisted in by our friends shedding the dirt of anger as they go on and do it for the sake of pure sympathy for the one on whom injustice and cruelty is imposed, I am certain even the prison officials brutality will be conquered. If it is done for the mere purpose of producing a sensation by demonstration or protest and bringing to the notice of the public or the higher officials of the Government, the cruelty imposed by the latter

all Superintendent, then it is not Satyagraha or non-resistance but only another form of the old method of agitation. I may succeed in putting the evil down or it may not, which depends on the comparative strength of force on either side and not on the comparative strength of good and evil. These observations of mine I hope do not mislead any one to think that I do not appreciate the bravery of the self-imposed suffering undertaken by Lakshminarayana and other friends. On the other hand, I wish so much, that all our people had been as sensitive to injustice and wrong and so courageous in suffering as these friends. If this had been our fortune, our struggle would have ended in victory long ago.

The un-official Jail Gazette brings news of a meeting dispersed by fire somewhere in Guntur District at the point of the rifle. Six persons killed and 30 injured.

How sweet is the whistle of the train every night after lock up. Perhaps it is because it is the only voice from outside world that directly reaches my cell.

This morning, the music of pipes woke me up with a sweet Udayaragam. There is a wedding in the Jailor's house. One won't believe it, but my time in the jail is quite full and I am as busy and pressed for me, as I was outside. The fact is that my health is so poor that I am easily fatigued and need a great deal more sleep and rest than others, and consequently can turn out but little work. Here are samples of my occupation on two days.

Rose at 5-30 A. M., Prayer. Made up my bed. Washed my teeth, strolled in the open, morning food, cleaned spittoon, cell floor, brought water and sat down to spin at 7-20 A. M. Spinning till 8-40 A. M. Read Pattanamathu Pillaiyar for an hour.



and did Socrates for 40 minutes. Washed my hands and feet and had my meal. At 11.30 sat down spinning till 12.45 close and rest till 1 P.M. Robinson Crusoe till 2.30 Spinning till 3.15 Bath put up clothes to dry Shaved and evening meal at 5.10 P.M. Washed dishes close got in the clothes, and water and made my bed. 6.30 P.M. Prayers till 7 P.M. Read Kural and Bible and retired at 8.15 P.M.

Another day — Prayer washed teeth Morning food stroll, cleaned spittoon and brought water 7.10 A.M. Spinning till 8.30 Wrote a petition for a condemned prisoner till 10 A.M. Pattanathu Pillalar till 11 A.M. Breakfast washed dishes etc. and rest till 12.45 P.M. Socrates till 2.10 P.M. Diary and spinning till 3.15 P.M. and went for bath Took up Robinson Crusoe at 4.20 at 4.15 P.M. evening meal and washed dishes cleaned up floor and set out in the open till 6 P.M. Prayer, Kural Bible and Pattanathu Pillal Retired 8.15 P.M.

I can now read or spin more than what I have indicated above. In fact what I do is up to the point of fatigue. It will be seen that my reading has been all devotional. Robinson Crusoe occupied much of time when I came into jail. Then I put it by for a long while. It was only yesterday I took it up again. It is no less devotional than the other books which make up my reading.

22<sup>nd</sup> Thursday — I am told by the Jailer that the Superintendent is obstinate about the urine pots of the close prison. Meanwhile Mahomed Hussain with 3 others carried the pots of the 1<sup>st</sup> Block this morning. So they are keeping it up well.

Like the Central College Day Committee the Directors of the Indian Bank had the courtesy to be admitted with

humour perhaps] of inviting me to a function of theirs on 4th February, addressing the said care of the Jail Superintendent Sir P. Theagaraja is unveiling a portrait of a founder of the Bank [M. Adinarayanayya] and opening an 'Economic-library'

Took up Robinson Crusoe again after a long while. What a beautiful book. It seems a number of politicals about 10 have come in to-day.

3-2-22 Friday —Drafted a petition for a condemned prisoner, who was defended unsuccessfully by my junior when at the bar, Mr. K. Narasimha Iyengar. The jail office should draft and send this petition and I thought I could amuse myself with the work.

As I am engaged in spinning, the thought strikes me that perhaps many friends if they saw me would wonder how I could thus waste my time over work which gulls and illiterate persons may well do, but which surely is not meant for men with brains and a high degree of education. There are so many books I have not read. If I kept reading them no one would accuse me of mis-spending my time. However, when one seriously considers the matter, one must come to this conclusion. That at a time of life when you know for certain, that additional learning will only make you die more learned, and not serve to enable you further to do anything useful to mankind, or to correct yourself in character in any new manner not hitherto vouchsafed to you, it is a mere self-indulgence and folly to be reading books if you can spend that time in producing or doing something useful to man. Under the circumstances helping to produce

a yard of cloth or a handful of food is a much more mortifying and proper though illiterate act than merely to acquire knowledge which you know will be sterile and pass away with you when you lay your account down to pass away in smoke and dust. Those who read or converse or think in order to produce something new and leave it to mankind for what it is worth, have good reason so to spend their time. But why should I who cannot compose any song poem or book or otherwise add to the world's stock of knowledge or mental or moral material, keep reading and reading for ever simply because it is the habit of the educated class, when I can spin some yarn and add to the clothing produced in our country. Mental exercises ought to be intended for the development of one's soul which we believe to be immortal and to perfect which we should always exert or to add to the world's stock of knowledge otherwise they are mere self-indulgences like overeating or drinking.

summoned to the Tower [This is the name for the Prison King's palace, a three storied building in the centre of the Jail grounds] Men are acting without leader or policy This is a pity 'On one side the 1st Block friends who are not asked to carry the pots are carrying them for Satyagraha, on the other hand the close prison people for whose sake this Satyagraha was taken up, are acting in the opposite direction.

My cough is persisting and gives me sleepless nights I fear I must give up the tomatoes and allow my stomach to take care of itself, and save my lungs and my sleep

Poor Nidhan Singh, the indefatigable, decorous, brave and patriotic Sikh Prisoner, who makes chappati for all his people has been coughing badly and has finally gone to hospital

A few minutes after I wrote this, the Jailor [who by the way is in uniform and busy in the jail inspite of the wedding in his house] came to me in the cell and complained about the close prison people having struck in respect of the urine pots He told me all kinds of things which being mixed up with great many variations from 'truths were unintelligible to me He said that some of the ringleaders were going to be flogged and some put down for heavy work, ragi-grinding, water pump and oilpress "Very well" I said He had thought apparently that the announcement would frighten me He then told me he had spoken to the Superintendent about my visit to the close prison on Monday last, about his having assaulted Subba Rao and my being present at the time etc Of course he must have given a very garbled account It is no wonder if a man loses all regard for truthfulness in course

of a long official life in which he is often put on his defence and in which he finds a disregard for truth a very handy weapon to protect himself with. He suggested that I should speak to the men and dissuade them from their recalcitrant conduct. I myself was much desiring to speak to them on the subject and so took advantage of his proposal. I did not wish to see them at the Jailer's office as I would be looked upon as mediator on his behalf. If he would send them to my cell I said I would gladly talk to them. He agreed to arrange for this but I doubt very much if he would have the courage to propose it to his Superintendent.

I am very sorry for the line which the men have taken. How can we rightly object to doing any work that might be imposed on us as prisoners if we cannot say that it is an immoral or irreligious act that is demanded of us. We should hardly agree to go to prison if we cared for such things in our struggle. If working with dirt and filth is imposed on us by government can we complain? Even if they put us down for general scavenging work we should do it. It is one thing for the Government to find its duties towards prisoners convicted for political offences as distinguished from crimes involving moral turpitude and quite another thing for us to claim better treatment or to strike or offer disobedience in respect of such claims. It is the duty of civilised Governments to show leniency but it is on our part a weakness and a lag from our ideal to think of claiming such leniency merely because we are fighting and that our leaders may be shown. It is the duty to fight uncharitably, consequently to which the above duty to try to win the ordinary legislative is

considered a vice All the ordinary rigorous term prisoners in the close prison carry their pots, why should we not do it when we are suffering the same kind of punishment? It may be that the punishment is wrongly imposed on us, but that is not our concern when we are out voluntarily to seek unjust punishment and take it without defence or plea of mitigation Government may not only imprison us but unjustly put us in dungeons and irons and impose every laborious or dirty task on us, yet we must accept the punishment. We would be shown in a poor light indeed if we are understood by the world to object to and to struggle against cleaning or carrying our own urine pots because it is degrading work fit only for certain classes of men and not for us Satyagraha has been famous for its votaries scavenging for themselves and we would not deserve to go under our leader's flag if we fought to be relieved from such work.

5—2—22 Sunday —The Jailor came this morning and told me the state of affairs regarding the non co-operator prisoners Some of them were put on heavy work far beyond their capacity and five having thereupon refused to do the work, have been given bar letters Pots are not given overnight to the men who refuse to carry them next morning. Many of them had consequently dirtied their cells He asked me whether I would go and speak to them I went and had a long talk with them I told them mostly the substance of the thoughts I noted above and that we should accept every barbarity and cruelty imposed on us Most of them agreed, but some especially those whose temper had been completely upset by the harshness and ill-treatment imposed on them stoutly refused to "co-operate" even to the extent of



desired a fresh talk with me Sometime afterwards, I understand the Superintendent sent for Mr Narasimma chariar and the Jailor related everything that happened to the Superintendent, who thereupon talked over the matter to Narasimbachar The Superintendent appeared to have been in a very good mood, asked Narasimbachari whether they could not come to a definite understanding saying that he was unwilling to be needlessly cruel or severe Narasimbachariar told the Superintendent that he would like to consult me and some people from the close prison and give an answer The Superintendent appears to have told the Jailor that he would speak to me about this to morrow In the meanwhile I asked the Jailor to allow me to meet the 1st Block friends again This was done We had a very pleasant meeting in my cell all to ourselves without any jail official intervening All of us agreed as to the course we should adopt except Mr Lakshminarayana, that we should advise the close prison friends to remove their pots if asked. We should on the other hand also recommend to the Superintendent humane treatment of the non-co-operator prisoners

7-2-22 Tuesday —Yesterday was a busy day The Superintendent asked me to meet all the non-co-operators and make proposals so that there may be a better understanding on both sides He said some things had been done by him which were undoubtedly wrong and so also on the side of non-co-operators some wrong things had been done, that neither side's wrong was an excuse for the other, and that he was willing if we would help, to begin a fresh page He appeared quite sincere He said he had received just that day an order from the Government instructing him



to treat the political prisoners in a different way from ordinary prisoners and now that he had powers to do so he was not going to be cruel or needlessly harsh. We accordingly had a Conference in front of my cell in the afternoon. At first there was great difficulty in proceeding. An angry state of mind produced by bad treatment, ill digested ideas regarding the principles of the movement, and mutual mistrust or want of trust all contributed to this difficulty. Mr Lakshminarayana did not lighten the task when he began with a statement that he fully supported the efforts of our friends in the close prison to offer civil disobedience to jail regulations. After some time however we came to unanimous conclusions. The carrying of urine pots was stoutly objected to on grounds of religious scruples by only one, which number finally increased to six. So we resolved to tell the Superintendent that this should not be insisted on. We also resolved to ask the Superintendent to cancel the heavy tasks imposed as punishments for not carrying the pots and the feters imposed as punishment for not coping with the heavy work thus given. We also had a number of other things to tell such as cloths below knees for Muslim men during prayer time, same number of interviews and letters to rigorous as to simple term prisoners daily bath facilities for rigorous prisoners separate booking facilities for political prisoners one of whom is willing to cook etc. I then explained to them the changed attitude of the Superintendent and the road for a better feeling on our part as well. This was better received than I had expected from the spirit which they had shown at the outset. I told them that our comfort should be such that Government should have not the least trouble in keeping non-cooperators in jail. It should

have no anxieties about us except to provide us with food and space Abdul Wahab of Tirupathur and Ramakrishnayya of Maharajahada, I was sorry to see, had lost their bearings on account of the trials to which the men had been exposed. They are such fine non-co operators. So it was a pity that they should be upset and talk and act in a manner inconsistent with the original plans and limitations of our movement. However, everything ended well, as stated above. I saw the Superintendent and handed him a Memorandum of our Conference proceedings. He readily agreed to every proposal and carried out at once the cancellation of punishments and heavy tasks, and what is more removed all the non-co-operators out of the close prison and placed them altogether, rigorous and simple into the 1st Block, a consummation which Mr Lakshminarayana and other friends in that block must feel to be the very maximum of their desire in the matter.

I had every reason to be thankful to God for the way in which this little tempest was stilled and I offered humble and thankful prayers.

These events which ended so happily have however made it clear to me that many of our friends have not yet realised their weakness. An honest and deep examination of the conduct of our friends would show that they were unable at a certain point to bear the troubles imposed on them by Government and were trying to find relief in the excitement of a conflict and fresh punishment. It is no use deceiving ourselves by praises such as self-respect, indignities etc. It is difficult for me to understand a state of mind which makes one refuse to carry one's own night pot as anything but a

breakdown of one's non-co-operating strength. It is even more difficult not to see the weakness that lurks in the attempt to court other punishments rather than work at hard tasks imposed on us. It is impossible to consider it as proper Satyagraha to complain about bar fetters put on us. It makes no difference because the sufferer does not complain and even utters brave words about it himself but others who are not given the fetters fret to see their fellow prisoners in bar fetters, and offer to do this and that in order to bring about punishment on themselves also. The method is no doubt non violent and in the line with Satyagraha, but the object in substance is the removal of our friends bar fetters which is inconsistent with our original plan and determination to accept suffering without complaint. It is vain to deceive ourselves by the idea that the punishments being grossly unjust we have a right to put an end to them by self-suffering. It is to suffer unjust punishments without protest or complaint but we have come here and we would be pulling off our own friends here if we attempt when inside jail to agitate, protest or offer Satyagraha against the hardships imposed on us there. The theory of Passive Resistance and non violent non-co-operation involves submission and excludes resistance when once we come to the stage of suffering the penalties of our resistance.

I was sorry also to see Satyan work in India through the formula of religious conversions. Baba Khan who had previously been in full accord with me that there was nothing wrong in carrying the gospel and that it was on the contrary a good thing that we should carry it - now protested that he had religious objections. I said in his case I believe that it was an honest change of opinion but about

the way in which one after another up to six went on adding themselves to the objections, I have no opinion but one, that they were playing with truth under the notion that ideas of self-respect and dignity together with the prestige of a battle were good excuse for using the formula of religion. In the battle of truth against falsehood, of good against evil, wherein we have discarded all the weapons and trust to the favour of spiritual weapons only, it is a fatal error to allow Satan to find his way into our fortress. All our strength would be gone beyond recovery if we allow falsehood to poison our souls. We shall overreach ourselves if we attempt to overreach Truth.

The acting Jailor came and made a long confessional history of his official and private life which it would be impossible to record here. We have sometimes the most curious mixtures of character in this world. The common idea associating suavity of temper and tact with an easy conscience and an ill-tempered brutality in outward conduct with honesty is as wrong as many an other popular notion.

Rama Saran of whom Hina Singh had spoken to me commendably, I saw for the first time yesterday. As I expected, he is rather a disturbing factor. He belongs to that too common type with mind unconvinced about non-violence and Satyagraha but for the sake of the objective, trying to be with the non co operators.

I saw Hina Singh again after a long while yesterday. Ever since I left hospital, I had not met him. His trouble has not been cured. I believe it is some kind of 'fistula'. He looks as if he won't last long, brave soul. I wish they gave him some better diet and looked after him.

-Subba Rao to-day has sent round a confession. He writes to say that he has realised his error in raising religious objections to carrying his own filth that he repents for his conduct and that he therefore inflicts on himself the punishment of taking the common night pots of the block from the room and placing them outside though there is a scavenger for the work. I was so glad to see that this young man saw the mistake he had been led into. I sent him in reply an extract from what I had written above. He is I fear getting morbid in temperament. I wish those around him took care to keep him in good spirits. He is really an inimitably fine young fellow. He would be a first rate Ashramite at Sabarmati. Finished Arathuppal in Hurul last night.

8-2-22 Wednesday - Had a bad fit of the asthma last night and feel very weary. No spinning to-day. Did much of Socrates. Almost literally rendered the whole of Criti. Phaedo must be a more difficult task. But perhaps much of it may be omitted as most of the philosophy would be commonplace for Indian readers. I desire only to make them realise the greatness and character of the Greek Martyr. I hope I will have the time to finish this work and add to it a brief story of the martyrdom of Christ. I shall not have been in prison in vain if I am able to do this little thing at least. I could not carry out this plan of adding the Life of Christ.

9-2-22 Thursday - Slept for 4 hours. Can't trace the reason for this but it is the most quiet and regular for my sleep has been in the last year than usual order.

10-2-22 Friday - Still mostly back rest. Did portion of Phaedo.

10—2—22 Friday —The telegram I sent to the office has not been despatched, neither has the letter that has come from home been delivered to me yet. It seems the Superintendent has gone away to Madras and things have to wait for him. If Dr. Rajan, Kothandaraman and Sastri have been all taken up [with inoffensive Sourinaya Pillai too] Adinarayana Chettiar has to take up the Congress office work, and with Ramanathan's help the work may go on easily. Rajagopalan would be of great assistance, but I don't know whether his nerves will permit his service being placed at our disposal. I don't think he can work except with me. With me he has worked very hard, even to the point of physical breakdown, but with others he is notoriously difficult.

The mosquitoes in these cells make a regular hell of it during the night and the flies in the daytime are a nuisance beyond compare. The big association blocks are more airy and being not so near the kitchen, there may be less of the vermin, but from all accounts the bugs and possibly also the lice are a big trouble there, on account of the large number of unwashed prisoners and their beds in each room. So I had better make no attempt to get out of the frying pan. I am glad to see that Mr. Narasimhachariar, Vakil of Guntur who had been thinning down and looking ill, is now quite healthy looking. So also has Md. Hussain got over his fever face and is adding to his weight. Mr. Shafiuk is still not in good health. Lakshminarayana is flourishing. Poor Srinivasa Iyengar has lost tremendous quantities of flesh. He is one of those who have grasped the principle of Satyagraha better than others. He is of a flabby constitution and the doctor does not seem to think much about his great loss of weight; but loss of fat by one

whose natural build is flabby when it is produced by untended causes is not good and may finally mean a breakdown of vital organs

I am glad that the story about Mahomet Ali and Shaukat Ali's hunger strike which appears to have encouraged some of the friends originally in the close prison here is now contradicted. A similar story is current about Lajpat Rai on which Ram Saran builds up his advice towards trouble which has not yet been contradicted to our knowledge. It is a great pity from many points of view that we are not allowed any newspapers. Young India at least might have been allowed. Poor Lakshminarayana the other day said in joke no doubt he would give up half his rations for a newspaper. What an appetite for the daily sheet have we developed? The Jailor though it useful for the anti non-operation point of view to frighten me with news of a terrible Volunteer disturbance somewhere in the North and fire opened by the Govt. forces and great loss of life and other casualties. Our Jillo is incapable of reading a newspaper or understanding public affairs. It is from the story of his life that he gave me 'I am a sorcerer' at his last city.

It is odd that the new revolt and also try my hand at the martyrdom of Christ. Poor Rangam Chettiar has been arrested. He appears to have asked to see me.

11-2-22 Saturday — The night was frosty. The temperature fell to 40°. The breeze only blew in the leaves of the trees all the night long but little breeze is not a breeze in the air. The angle of vision is too high and narrow and the road does not

between two projections of masonry which effectively keep out all movement in the air. The mosquitoes seem to be a violent type, for they sting sharply and through thick Khaddar and get in through the least little opening in your covering which you may keep for breathing. I suppose putting me in a cell of this sort with a single hole six feet from the floor for window instead of a verandah or other place where there are true windows and the air may move now and then, is 'special treatment' for political prisoners. Perhaps I am too bitter, but after a sleepless night this may be excused.

Had a letter from Gandhiji besides one from home. The former is scrupulously non-political and dated the 3rd February from Bardoli. 'I was glad and thankful to get your note. You certainly miss nothing by not having newspapers. And I do envy your spinning wheel and Ramayana. The latter I hope is not a wretched translation of Valmiki but the original of Kamban of which I have read so much in Pope's Tamil Handbook. You must not lose flesh. I thought in our company I was the lowest weight. But you beat me by fully 10 lbs now. I hope you are allowed plenty of milk. Let me prescribe for you. If you can get milk and plenty of sweet juicy fruit—oranges or grapes, you will get rid of your asthma and gain in weight. Devadas is in Allahabad. Kristodas and Ramdas look after me. You are not the only one to enjoy your solitude. Sundaram is just now at the Asram undergoing a vow of silence. He has read too much and thought so little. His silence may do him good. Yours sincerely, M K G."

The letter from home was disappointing in that neither Lakshmi nor Narasimham has written anything in it. But



Lakshmi has put her little signature under what Papa wrote neither Narasimham nor Ramu has written anything from Salem.

Warder Kesava Pillay has been sent off on other duty as he was found to be negligent. He left the compound gate not locked properly one night which the Chief Warder saw next morning and summoned him to the Tower and sent him on gang duty. He came to-day and took his Pattanathu Pillar from me.

Non-official visitor Padmanabha Naidu was here again yesterday. He follows the inefficient method of talking unofficially to the Deputy Jailor and others, to put matters right. The jail officials are adepts in the art of talking nicely to people and putting them off. Nothing but official pressure does any good with them.

My time of supply is as irregular as anything can be.

12-2-21. Sunday. — My telegrams asking Chettiar R. marathan and Naraswami Nalcker to come up for an interview were not sent up at first because the Superintendent was away at Madras. When they were brought back to me, I withheld them to see the letter I had from home which was also delayed for two days. I sent the telegrams again yesterday early in the morning. As ill luck would have it they were sent up with the bicycle orderly that goes for the post and one of them (marked by me as private for urgent despatch) was brought back as the Postal Official was too dense to understand the multiple address I have given. Then it was sent by a waiter on foot. The jail is about 3 miles from the Tel. office. I am very anxious the message would have reached Salem at 6 P.M. and I am of this opinion for the purpose intended to be achieved. I am sorry it did not come today but tomorrow.

I went up to see Rangam Chetty yesterday Poor fellow—I little knew he had been so ill—he looks like a ghost He told me how death had stared him in the face He swore he saw Yama's men who called him to go with him He swore at them and turned them away and was saved But he says that within a few minutes of this dream of his, another patient breathed his last He is past danger now. It was amusing to hear him say that his only anxiety had been that his body would be cut up without a decent funeral if he died in the hospital and that he was wanting to see me only to avert this.

13—2—22 Monday —

Parade day as usual " Well, all right ? "

" Quite all right, thank you "

I had thought of asking and mentioning many things but thought better over it and the above was the result

My lads have not come to see me yesterday as my brother wrote Possibly my messages received late by them upset their programme They have not come even to day.

Government appears to be making a great attempt to rally the people round itself once again The crocodile tears they shed over Civil Disobedience leading to subversion of peace and happy domestic life, must be enough to drown even a whole nation But, really, the remedy is in their hands We did not choose Civil Disobedience, disruption of domestic felicity and untold suffering for the pleasure or the fun of it, but because we prefer these to continuing in servitude and dishonour Government can prevent the sufferings of the people, if really their mind is so moved, as they make it out to be, by conceding the people's demands instead of

asking them to stop the movement because of the suffering it involves. It is a wonderful mixture of hypocrisy pride and interest which yet may deceive some people

They are making a heroic effort at self-defence by pleading that Disobedience was resolved upon by Gandhiji even before the Criminal Law Amendment Act was applied against the volunteer bodies. No doubt we resolved on Civil Disobedience for righting our wrongs. But the crime and folly of making all Congress work criminal does not become any the less a crime for that reason. It hastened our pace in an unexpected manner but there is no meaning in confusing the issue on that pretext. Both the Government of India's reply to Gandhiji's manifesto and Lord Ronaldshay's speech seek to cover their retreat in this manner

14-2-22 Tuesday —krishnaswami and Ramaswami Paicker came yesterday evening and saw me without the others coming up from Salem. I requested the Jailor to treat the interview as unfinished and to permit the others to come up to-day. There was some difficulty in arranging this but it was overcome and I saw them all again to-day. The younger Padupalayam Zamindar and Krishnaswami Chettiar had come besides Adinarayana Chettiar and Narasimha Iyer; or Ramu and Narasimham also came. Duraiswami too. So it was a full meeting

Congress affairs are very depressing. The violence at Gondahtur appears to have set back everything. I cannot edge well from here, with little information about things and out of touch with the atmosphere prevailing. But I fear the decision to let things remain dull now is wrong. To set a state programme before the people at a time when violence

sion is in full swing is likely terribly to set the clock back I am however too much depressed and may see things in a better light later on Let me pray. So many of my most trusted fellow workers have gone to jail, that I feel when I go out I shall be more lonely even than I am here How should Gandhi have been feeling all these days when all his fellow workers have been snatched away and he is left quite alone

15—2—22 Wednesday —In the absence of all the sturdy leaders of various provinces who are now all in prison, and especially of the Ali Brothers, Gandhi's decisions are not balanced by every consideration that the position of an emasculated nation necessitates While they were with him, it looked as if, they acted mostly as logs, but when they are away one sees their function The decision practically to suspend all thoughts of Civil Disobedience and to go back to membership enrolment, i e, from war to peace, is likely to be a grievous blow to Bengal, Andhra, and U P Tamil Madras though it cannot claim to have made much headway in any department will lose proportionately more severely than even other provinces by this retreat It is a misfortune that Bombay did not take to prison-going seriously

Missed my prayer for the first time this morning having slept off till 6 A M when the cell door was opened The officials do not when passing by in advance of the opening of the cells shout 'Rise, Rise,' at these two or three cells, out of consideration for us. The Jailor in apparent jubilation told me this morning that non-co-operation had gone to sleep Gandhi had cried halt to Civil Disobedience. I did not waste time over this with him. I bitterly complained to

him that the settlement I had arrived at with the Superintendent in respect of the treatment of political prisoners had not been carried out properly. New comers are put on the heaviest work available in the jail. Other items too have been entirely left unperformed. He pleads inability. There seems to be some bad faith in all this. I just learn a young man who had been put at the pumping of water has gone to hospital and brought out blood from the chest. I subsequently learnt that this man was at once relieved of this work. He is an epileptic.

The Jailor told me that there was a likelihood of all political prisoners being concentrated in one prison in the Province. This must be to Jail authorities a great relief. All that they want is that there should not be inconvenient light thrown into the jail and the nuisance of reforming influence and pressure brought to bear on the barbarities and corruptions of their administration. They have no other aim again political prisoners.

How beautifully does my neighbour Md Ghouse's faith mix with my own silent prayer. Yet how the two communities were I with and killed and hated each other and how much more there's still to be done.

10-0-00. Thursday — Now that the time of my release is approaching, I begin to see how flat the freedom will fall on me. Looking about I will see only a desert of men of my kind. I have work as being available to myself so. If by the time that still remains no change in outlook or program and if were come to be. I wonder how I shall adjust myself to the dreary atmosphere.

Learnt at 8 P M. to day [Thursday] of Gandhiji's fast. He has once again discovered that a mob will do violence of a kind, the cowardice and brutality of which gives a shock to his whole nature, even though the non-co-operation movement (and a critical phase of it) is being contemplated at the time, even though the perpetrators sympathise with the aims and objects of the movement and have times without number heard Abimasa preached

Either he must be convinced that Congress Volunteers perpetrated or encouraged the murders at Gorakhpur or he must definitely postulate an impossible condition precedent for his movement that mobs that any wise connect themselves by mere sympathy, with the aims and objects of the movement should refrain from violence just as much as the organisers and partakers of the movement itself. Non-co operation commands almost universal sympathy in India and so this condition would come to this, that there should be no serious crimes of violence committed by anybody in India while the movement is on. Unless the cause of the suspension of the programme (and his five days fast) is that Congress workers committed and encouraged the murders, I feel that it is a confession that the programme is discovered to be a moral impossibility

I fully realise the gravity of the offence of the mob at Gorakhpur. But in spite of my tenderest and most complete attachment to my master and the ideal he stands for, I fail to see why there should be a call for stopping our struggle for birthrights because of such events. The Malabar atrocities are a much greater reason if Gorakhpur be a good reason.

No, I fail to see from here (in seclusion and without materials it is true) the logic of the grave step taken.

But God leads us right where logic may not. I feel that the nation is not strong enough yet to lose Gandhiji now and his arrest and imprisonment was imminent and it is only an event of this sort that Providence could interpose to prevent it. Again I feel also that the nation is yet not strong enough for the sacrifices called for and an early settlement may be in the plan of Providence. A settlement is in the highest degree probable now.

Meanwhile the fast for two days may prove too much in his present condition of body due to age and ill health.

17-2-22. Friday — Passed a night of real terror like to those that I had often known seven years ago and before. Sat up like a ghost and found some relief in lighting my candle and making also some hot water on it for sipping. A solitary cell is not the place for asthma of nervous type. However the comparative facility I have now acquired at concentration and prayer (though yet far from satisfactory) helped me to forget the trouble.

Information that Hakim Ajmal Khan and Moulana Azad both had infiltrated to Gandhiji from the disturbed area that Mass Civil Disobedience was impossible owing to violent outbreaks that Hindol operations would infect the district areas also and that therefore the Hindol campaign also had stopped. It is also news that certain volunteer bodies in the affected area were disbanded by Government Committee on 16th inst. This last is an action to fear of local efforts and gathering masses of them therefore suggest that the Government are aware of the danger of the disturbances.

Any way there seems more reason for the Working committee's suspension than appeared at first sight

Yet I am not convinced that Gandhiji's idea, that the mass mind will be trained to non-violence by repeated propaganda is right. There has been repetition of the idea and reiteration of this condition *ad nauseam*. Yet mobs break into anger when provocation is offered

No amount of waiting, no amount of lecturing will bring about the change that is desired more than is at present achieved. What is wanted is example and trial. The policy of suspension at every distant and unconnected outburst gives no chance for example. Discipline, not knowledge, is what is wanted. Mere knowledge can be given by propaganda. But discipline can be got only by personal trial, failure and example

A certain amount of ill-considered high speed was pitched as a necessary condition in our first programme which was the cause of not a few of the troubles and failures. We have now all the disadvantages of a retreat— with the mass-mind, a retreat is a great handicap to work with

18—2—22 Saturday —No news yet about Gandhiji after the fast. To the loneliness I am dreading to find myself in, upon release from prison, is now added the depression of failure and absence of scope for work. I cannot find any light yet to lift us out of the darkness we are in. Are we going to get a few paces forward in Reform as a result of all the terrible sacrifices that we non-co operators have made? This could well have been achieved by steady and contented work in the



old 'constitutional' way without all this grievous suffering that thousands of families have borne in the great hope of Swaraj. Self purification and strengthening there has been no doubt. But this is alas not what the 'earth' in us can be satisfied with and the price has been too heavy in so many cases—No—it will take me long to reconcile myself to a few changes in the Imperial and Local Governments as a satisfactory termination to this great struggle. But I blame no one. The nation is too weak too far drawn in economic misery to be able to fight and win in one campaign. We have to carry on many campaigns before we can come to the end of it and peace and recuperation are necessary at the end of each campaign.

Had to take the asthma mixture at midnight and then had some rest with a few breaks.

The Andhra friends have again been communicating to me regarding them. They complain that the superintendent has not kept his promises made at the settlement. The chief complaints are about baths not being allowed daily to the first out prisoners and about the separate cooking. They want the curry alone to be prepared by themselves but the jail authorities want them to be the whole cuisine.

This is heavy work and is perhaps intended merely to frighten them out of the idea. The Jail people do not make any innovation in the kitchen and ration arrangements. This is what Mr. Chanduri says and I am inclined to agree with him. I can help or hinder a little in the matter I can suggest yet it was really only outwardly that the separate cooking will be tolerated as a whole or not at all whatever the motives of the officials may be.

The jail is getting whitewashed (in the literal sense) all over, against the expected visit of the I. G. [Narayanasami] our waterman convict is for once hard worked. Poor man he is in jail now only for his fine, his substantive term having been served out ---

A young fellow here puts the convict problem in a nutshell. He awaits his release in 9 days hence. He is a first offender. He bought a new fine tempting cloth for Rs 2 from a fellow who proved to be a thief. The latter was not caught, but the lad who bought the cloth was convicted. "People who go out come in again at once, what shall we do for this?" He asked pathetically. His own case was not a difficult one. He has father and mother and a family that work on a field taken on varam, so he can be absorbed in his family and be protected against a second offence or charge. But the ordinary man who has no such family but has to be a mere cooly and look out for himself, is in a sad plight. Hence he comes in again and again and puts on the old convict's black cap and makes the best of jail life as his only hope. It makes one sad to see some of the prisoners—a large number are criminally lazy and evade work and a great deal more efficient supervision is necessary to set matters right,—so hard working, so efficient and even conscientious in doing their task, by compulsion leading such well disciplined lives without drink, and without any other sin yet slaving for nothing. If only they led such hard lives of purity and discipline in their own homes, how happy and prosperous they and their families could be. As soon as one of these is released I suppose he takes a day's holiday and drinks and then all the discipline is lost, and he is the old man again. Weighment to day shows me steady at 101 lbs again.

20—2—22. Monday — To-day's early morning news is that the Prison King's weekly parade has been postponed to to-morrow. This is to enable him to see to the execution of a condemned prisoner which is fixed for to-morrow and to do the parade the same morning. He would have to get up early in the morning for the execution—it is usually finished before 6 A.M. and why should he bother out of bed on two consecutive days in the week so early in the morning.

Appadurai the butler is to be hanged to-morrow. Night after night I used to hear the chatter of gallows friendship. The Sepoy would cry "Appavu! Appavu!" "hagiah! hagiah" and they would carry on a conversation each from his own cell. The chatter would go on every night till I went to sleep. Great latitude is allowed to these condemned prisoners by the warders, for they have found that there is no effective sanction in respect of prisoners who have been already condemned to the worst punishment in the Code. "hagiah!" disappeared for some months past for the poor fellow was hanged one fine morning. For some days the leader in the conversation (the Sepoy) was talking of hagiah being in Heaven and eating his full meal with God—I ating is the chief event in prison. One will see it if one comes to jail like us. Then after two or three days there was nothing more about agia. From tomorrow Appavu also will disappear likewise. If I remember rightly Appavu leaves behind him—at least 11 children.

The next characteristic of the jail prisoners is one who is ought to be removed at once—that of hanging men without giving them any trial. The poor fellows do not know when they will be taken away. He is kept for many weeks and

times months waiting for the appeal to the High Court and the petitions to the Local and Imperial Governments to be disposed of. These take long enough to make him get over the idea of nearness to death which might have chastened his mind in the beginning. Then without ministration of religion or prayer or any thoughts of God, he is seized one morning when he does not expect anything like it, and taken away arms bound and there at the gallows his legs are fettered and a cap put over his head and in a few minutes the platform goes down and he is despatched. Mostly not even relations know about it, and they do not come therefore to take the dead body. It is recorded as unclaimed and made the best public use of, probably for medical college dissection. What does the Bureaucrat care for religious ministration or prayer unless there comes a distinct G O about it when of course it will be scrupulously attended to as a piece of bureaucratic discipline.

Appadurai is a Christian, but that will make no difference. Christianity though it is their own professed religion, is not much of anything with the Bureaucrat. It won't alter his usual conduct. His religion is the "G O" and these G O's are made and revealed from time to time in such manner as to get things efficiently done without causing risk or annoyance or trouble to white officers and not more than absolutely unavoidable to other officers provided they get above Rs 200 a month. In fact the grand principle of responsibility, in a Bureaucracy is that only the lowest in the grade, shall be fully responsible, and all the others shall as far as possible be free from blame for any mishap. The ascending order of irresponsibility is the life principle of bureaucracy.

The Jail authorities won't give a single thought to who her Appadurai may or may not take his peace with God before he yields up his life. That is no their concern. They were concerned only in getting the execution done without any hitch on the day fixed.

Poor Nalnamalai Konan's petition has been rejected by the Local Government. I don't know who among the Government members is in charge of this department but he seems to be most careless or heartless in the extreme. Life is so precious yet Bureaucracy values it differently. This fellow is only 27 years old. The evidence is only circumstantial. The jewels he is said to have produced might be that which the deceased woman wore but nobody knows whether he was the murderer or only an accomplice in securing the jewels. A lad known to be of previous good character might have been given a chance to serve 20 years in prison and come out free at least when he is 40 years old, instead.

21-2-23 Tuesday — I was up very early this morning — perhaps the thought of the man to be executed woke me up before time. I was sitting up in my bed playing scales. Mahomed Ghossein in the next cell — He was singing out the 'Kari' "Have they come, have they come" occasionally enquired the warden and they did come at 10 some minutes with a loud very loud and the warden's man was hurried away hard after as I could understand from the sound of the people. In a few minutes the chief warden returned on his usual errand and passed my cell from which I know that Appadurai's life has been saved by law. Many do 'walk' to a way what Judge & all the things are done.

that it was just and right to do so. However I have no business to moralise over the death of a single man, when millions of lives are taken away every day by men without a thought about it. The animals have as good lives as men and their daily slaughter cries before God for relief.

Mr S Srinivasa Iyengar was here to day. He talked long with me and he went round and saw the other non co-operators also and then after spending a few minutes with the Superintendent went away for his case before the Sub Court in Vellore. He is very much disappointed with Gandhi's latest instructions, but I could not understand his own desire in the matter. He is opposed to mass civil disobedience, he does not like people going to jail even in individual disobedience. Still he feels in some inexpressible and vague kind of way that the movement should have a stirring programme. He was trying to give me logical definitions of his position, but I was not able to follow. What I could make out was something like this, that people should go to jail and keep up the fight but everybody should not go. A careful and judicious selection should be made so that active propaganda work outside may not suffer. He emphasised he was more optimistic now. He told me about the National Club. I hope it will not become the nucleus of a new party without any constructive programme, but only intended to obstruct the Congress Executive.

22—2—22 Wednesday — I fear we will be thoroughly spoilt before we go out of this jail. Some few of us—who

have lost weight—will be given butter milk half an anna worth each daily subsequently reduced to quarter anna worth each. The butter milk may be poor but the thing brings us the smell and atmosphere of home life.

The Andhras have at last got their own cooking. Mr Lakshminarayana insists that the Superintendent told him that they should cook everything except kunjee early morning and then not for all non-co-operators but only for the Andhras. He says that having agreed to this they cannot accept my suggestion to cook only kolambu and include the Tiruvannamalai people also. The Jailor told me that kolambu alone may be cooked and for the Tiruvannamalai people also. I do not wish to interfere in this and shall leave it to Mr Lakshminarayana to arrange just as the Andhras wish.

Finished Margolianth's Mahommed in the Heroes of the Nations Series Krishnaswami left the book for me to amuse myself with, when he was last here The author's treatment of the Prophet is unsatisfactory

The book makes the Prophet a man of great talent and unbounded ambition It works up the whole history of his message on the centre motive pivot of political ambition. The biographer assumes that the prophet has as little Faith as himself and therefore that he worked up the whole of his life and message as a keen and ambitious man to gain his end—which is not to become a Prophet, but to become a head of a State by becoming a prophet The theory of the biographer is that Mahommed was "steering for the destination" of personal distinction and influence all the time An irony runs throughout the psychology presented by the author The author's own unbelief disables him from seeing any springs for human action, except in a motive for betterment of one's position If a non muslim cannot write a good biography of Mahommed, much less can a total unbeliever

In relating the early progress of Islam, the biographer appears to be suffering from a preconceived idea that the worship of the pre Islamic Arabs was entirely devoid of any idea of a single God and attributes the idea of Allah which undoubtedly existed in it to the influence of the Jews and the Christians Polytheists like Hindus can understand how the idea of the Supreme Being is blended with the worship of idols But our author assumes that the Arabs had absolutely nothing in this religion except superstition and that the Jews and the Christians furnished Mahommed copy for his monotheism. Mahommed is described as being "used"



Baker's credulity to make him invite men to recognise his own claims. The author revels in a persistent comparison of the Prophet with the procedure and character of Joseph Smith the founder of Mormonism and even makes him a cleverer and bigger trickster than the latter. If Mahommed did not run away when persecuted to an asylum in a neighbouring Christian State it was because he did not want to be a subject in safety but aimed a sovereignty. The book abounds with many morally unfavourable hypotheses based on mere conjecture to explain away Mahommed's successes at obtaining converts. It makes his affability and peaceful temperament a mere case of deep sagacity and caution and a waiting for opportunity.

The Biographer's unbelief and antipathy rises to a climax when dealing with the migration to Medinah he exhibits bitter disappointment that there was not a man in Mecca who could strike a blow and act and be ready to accept the responsibility for acting that many as were Mahommed's ill wishers, there was not one of them who had this sort of courage that there was no magic trace by which he could be tried (like Jesus and executed presumably). Even the description of an escape from an assassination is in a language that indicates disappointment which has the point of brutality when it is gratuitously offered to the reader that all who were sleeping in Mahommed's barracks when the assassin came could have been captured for a fortnight but that the Qurashites were too shrewd for such a proceeding. There is not a word of praise for Ali except an ill-considered note. The author's disappointment at a failure of plots for assassination is seen again when

Abrad and Amir's story is referred to. No more dignified or respectful phraseology is requisitioned than "convicts escaping from prison" when describing the thrilling escape from Mecca and retirement in a cave to avoid pursuit. ~~The~~ <sup>His</sup> appointment with Mahomed's success makes the author most bitter and angry with the Jews. 'Had they [The Jews] any plan, any resolution, any courage, they would have utilised this period of failure and ignominy to crush him."

Why the work of writing a life of Mahomed as a 'hero' of his nation was entrusted to one who apparently boiled with antipathy towards the hero, one cannot understand. The whole scheme of the book is to look upon Mahomed as a political adventurer having the minimum of morality, carving out a career, and unscrupulously working it out. No place is given to earnestness of conviction, inspiration, religious zeal, or virtues of personality. For the rapid and remarkable successes of the Prophet's message the biographer throughout finds out explanations in fraud, corruption, self interest, faction or gullibility. The unalterable fidelity of the Medina men is matter for flippant irony. It furnishes the biographer no clue to the force of the prophet's personal life and character. The systematic use of the term "leading articles" for the Surahs of the Koran, is hardly worthy of decent biography. The term "Apostle of God" is sneeringly used in appropriate places. Yet in the preface the author promises to write "respectfully" about the prophet.

It is a relief to find a genuine attempt at fairness after all, in the final remarks about the destruction of the Jews at Medina. But even here the author's failure to appreciate the value of religious faith is characteristic. He is surprised

that so very few of the Jews availed themselves of the alternative of Islam offered to them. He cannot understand how large numbers of people prefer dying to losing faith.

The modern unbeliever cannot but see the history of a great faith and the life of its founder all topsy turvey. A glaring example of this is that this biographer cannot see that it was the religious movement that was the prime factor in the early history of Islam and that the political upheaval came in as an unavoidable consequence. He cannot see how men can care so much for mere faith. He can see and will seek no explanation therefore that man should care for political power. So he makes out that Mahomed was a political ambition, and believes that the religious movement was started by him for the political end could only be gained thereby. He even says (p. 112) that this "example of Mahomed impressed on all conspirators (see the references to the Mosque of D'Isent)"

The story of a dome the quarrel between the prophet and his wives over his refusal to give them household supplies and their refusal to their wives related merely for the sake of gossip. The value of the episode which proves that in the matter of wealth and tributes taken from many conquered tribes a Mahomed was a poor man by choice is lost sight of.

With all the brilliant details of this biography to explain any violence and if it is a violence to live for every apparently good article that leads to be led adversely with the likelihood and generally at the hands of the Prophet at the taking of Mecca. The Prophet was not too good. There was no generosity of any of the citizens. All that is written were left over. In that he is of triumph. It is even the leaves of

the Refugees which had been seized and sold by the Meccans were touched. Even the keys of the temple were not taken away from the hereditary holders. If any Meccans were killed without authority, justice was rendered by Mahomed.

In spite of unsympathetic treatment of the biographer, the character of Mahomed stands out too clear for mistake. A man of great natural affection, devoid of fanaticism, guided by reasons of humanity and sound policy, always respected by his fellow citizens for his great uprightness of character and trustworthiness, when he attained the power and the authority, he "allowed himself no day of rest, and worked as hard as the most industrious of sovereigns. He managed both the external and internal affairs of the vast and growing community he had founded. Always smiling, he, at times threw aside the gravity belonging to his office. In no case did he injure his administration by nepotism in spite of his numerous relatives. He never allowed them to interfere with the course of justice. Squatting in his poor apartment, with a veil over his face, and a palm branch in his hand, he gave and took away crowns. There was no detail of conduct too trivial to be made the subject of an appeal to the Prophet. Amidst all duties of General, Legislator, Judge and Diplomatist, the Prophet did not neglect those of preacher and teacher. His punishments were characterised by mildness. Mutilation and torture were forbidden. So early as the 7th century, he prohibited the burning of offenders which barbarity was retained among Christian nations even up to nineteenth century. His humanity extended itself even to the lower animals. He prohibited the employment of living birds as targets and remonstrated against ill-treatment of

camels. He once compelled some of his followers to extinguish a fire they had set to an ant-hill. Foolish acts of cruelty connected with superstitions were swept away. He prohibited the cutting of the tails of horses.

For the female sex Mahommed's system achieved much. The condition of slaves and captives were relieved by many humane regulations. For example the parting of the mothers from their children or of brothers was prohibited. Scourging was discouraged and murder was punishable with retaliation. Manumission was greatly encouraged. Slaves were allowed a system whereby they could contract for their own manumission. Heirless estates were inherited by the slaves. Moslems were asked to feed and clothe their slaves like themselves. He made elaborate regulations on inheritance the equitable character of which is recognised by the Jurists. All his work he did within the remarkably short period of only a few years and left it in such a condition that his death was not followed by disintegration as in other cases but by increased progress.

2-7-23 Saturday — More friends have come to from K. H. re. I understand that some will be coming in by train for from Trichinopoly Jail.

One lot of cells which had been left all to ourselves to occupy till 9 Moslem prisoners who took part in the Carnatic Jail riot have been put into the nine cells at the end of my cell. All of them with that unalloyed barbarity—the last letters. The doors were removed I was glad to see after a few days.

The Superintendent and his two Habashis came and sat up at my end of a morning. Your letter to Mr

Gandhi has alarmed him ", said the Major " He has put in a note in the Young India He compares your case with some other unfortunate prisoner elsewhere, says some one else is given newspapers, while you are not and so on "

When I asked him whether I could see the note, he said he had not the paper I wonder then how he got to know about it However it might be, he discussed with me for a long time over my diet, and subsequently took an exact inventory of it, I don't know for what purpose I had a very bad night yesterday and the spasms and weariness continue in the daytime to-day also But I don't see what the jail people can do for it as I told the Superintendent this morning,

The condemned sepoy behind my cell is going through a crisis The day before yesterday, for long in the night, he was reciting verses in praise of God and Rama and assuring the human soul of Divine Grace and calling for resignation He was preaching in soldierlike style to his neighbour Rama Reddy and wound up with " you have no courage Pluck up, man, go straight to Death like a bold man I won't talk to you henceforth unless you are brave" To day he refused to take food He says he must be given rice meals or be executed I have not cared to appeal to the Government for mercy. Why am I bothered thus with ragi cake?" he asks Indeed I don't see why a poor fellow condemned to death and refusing to appeal should not have, if he wants it, such a wretchedly modest luxury as the rice meal I hope the jailor will remember to carry out his promise to me and give the poor chap his rice for the few days he has yet to live

My friend Alladi was here to day We had a long chat and then went round to the main non-co-operation block

so kind loving and considerate that indeed I feel the passing really as an event of pain.

20-3-22 Monday — Learnt that Dilate gave six years S I to Christ. God gave us a man to lead us but the Government claims the right to take him away from us. His will be done!

Bade farewell to the friends and left the jail at about 10 a.m. The Superintendent followed me on the stage and asked if the jail did not look better from outside. Of course I said the inside was not so bad as it was thought to be. "Don't come again" he said as we shook hands and parted. Mr. Slogaravelu Chettiar and Ramasami Nair had come from Madras to meet me. In Vellore town I was attempted to be interviewed by the *Deccan Herald* Correspondent. I told him that having just come from jail I had to learn about the situation and could not presume to instruct him as soon. They had a public meeting in the evening but I refrained from speaking for the same reason.

Got plenty of jam, morcha gaultheri sharbat and other things to the friends in jail. I hope the Superintendent will pass them on to the young fellows. I am anxious about Mr. K. Annaswami who was getting pains in the chest & the state of the liver a bit too often of late. He has now the jaundice to get it. With the promise of calling the jail medical men to a look by him properly.

